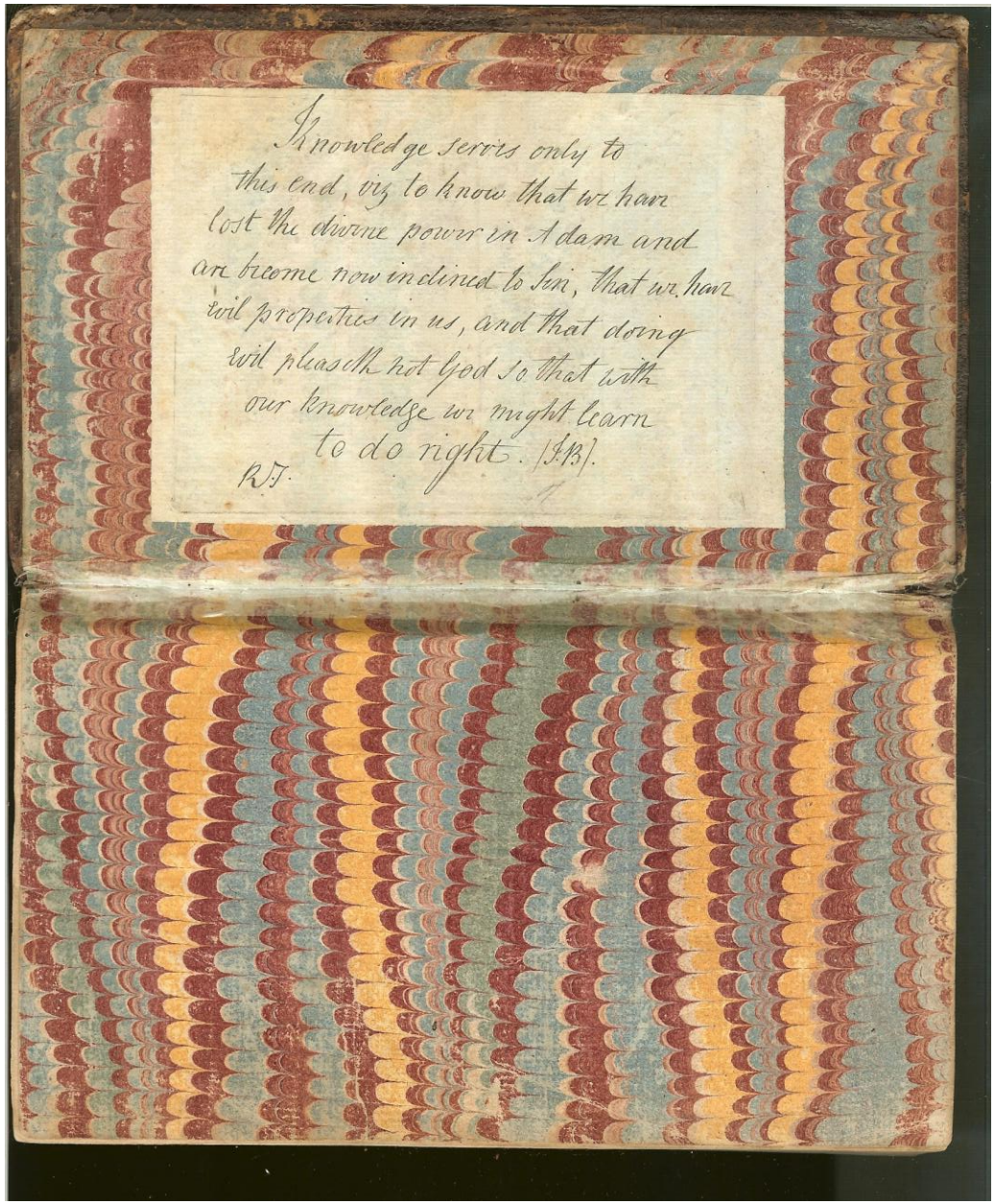
Knowledge serves only to
this end, viz to know that we have
lost the divine power in Adam and
are become now inclined to Sin, that we have
evil properties in us, and that doing
evil pleaseth not God so that with
our knowledge we might learn
to do right. [JB].
RJ.

A GIFT

FROM THE TRANSLATOR

TO R: TIGHE ESQ.

1776

THE

EXEMPLARY LIFE

OF THE PIOUS

LADY GUION,

TRANSLATED FROM

HER OWN ACCOUNT

IN THE

ORIGINAL FRENCH.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A NEW TRANSLATION OF HER

SHORT AND EASY METHOD OF PRAYER,

By THOMAS DIGBY BROOKE.

Which TREATISE was the first Rise of her

SEVERE PERSECUTIONS.

Wisdom is justified of her Children. Mat. xi. 19.

DUBLIN:

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PREFACE.

BIOGRAPHY, in all its various kinds, is the moſt captivating ſpecies of reading to the human mind—do but adapt the ſubject to the reader, and its entertainment becomes delightful, and its influence irreſiſtible.

—THE ſecret cauſe of this lies deep in the heart of man—every one has ſome ſubject that he admires—ſome aim that he ſtretches after.—The life of the man who poſſeſſes in any eminent degree his revered idol, becomes to him as a precious mine,——wherein his treaſure lies hid—and he ſearches therein with diligence, to diſcover by what method it was attained, and by what power ſecured, that he alſo may become partaker of his happineſs, and poſſeſſor of this favourite object.

WITH what avidity do the young, and the thoughtleſs ſeek after novels——the amorous and flighty after tales and romances——the warrior after the Lives of the Cæſar's and Alexander's——the ſtudent after Newton's and Plato's—and the Chriſtian after Saints and Holy Souls.

THESE demonſtrate their aim by their purſuit, and give the ſtrongeſt evidence of the bent of their Hearts, by that reading which affords them the moſt entertainment and delight. A vitiated and ſickly appetite can as ſoon reliſh plain and wholeſome food, as a corrupted heart pious Lives and divine Writings.

HERE then we plainly perceive the dangerous and deadly tendency of all Works of Fancy, and flighty genius.—Not to ſpeak at all of that filthy tribe of lewd, profane, and unprofitable Stuff, that is the deteſtation of every man of ſenſe, and every woman of virtue.——But thoſe more approved Works, wherein humanity is diſplayed—Sentiments are ſweetly refined, and even Virtue itſelf comes forth to claim your reſpect and applauſe.—Here.—too, too often—if not ever, the deluding or deluded writer, offers to your view a mixed and totally inconſiſtent Character, a jumble of unnatural and incompatible qualities, and ſets them up as a ſtandard of Virtue and imitation, a touchſtone of truth; while the poor deceived reader—finding in himſelf ſome

ſome of the ſweet and amiable natural ſoftneſſes, and generous diſpoſition of the hero he admires, imagines himſelf neceſſarily poſſeſſed of all the piety and virtue, which the author had aſcribed ſo liberally to his patched up character,—and thus lulls himſelf aſleep in the deluſion of death.

—THE ſacred Scriptures indeed, give us, above all other writings, faithful and juſt characters of men—where if we read of a Saint's turning Sinner, we read alſo of the juſt judgment of God upon his crimes, and the bitterneſs of his repentance.

THE lives of pious perſons, wrote by themſelves, compiled from their own papers, or related by ſome faithful friend, who gives us moſtly their own words, and carefully collects their important ſentences—theſe are the precious Books—the bleſſed treaſuries of ineſtimable worth. Here we have not only true precept but animating example—and the Soul that thirſts after grace and ſalvation—has the whole proceſs and progreſs, by which her fellow-traveller encountered all difficulties, eſcaped all dangers, and overcame all obſtacles that poor pilgrims meet with in their journey *to life*.

GOD aſſures us, that he is no reſpecter of perſons—*but in every Nation he that fears him, and works righteouſneſs, ſhall be accepted of Him.*—Let this divine ſentence be our rule and guide, ſo ſhall

we not greatly err.—For thoſe whom God bears with and accepts, let us not dare to judge and reject.—What! poor wretched mortals as we are; ſhall we preſume to limit and reſtrain that mercy, that is over all his works? or how far he ſhall ſhower out his graces and gifts upon the creatures of his Workmanſhip, and the redeemed of his Blood?—Shall we utterly deſpiſe and caſt away all the experience and leadings of a choſen Veſſel—becauſe the product of a French ſoil and foreign clime—Shall we not rather glory—that lillies grow among thorns, and that the true Son of Righteouſneſs can call up and nouriſh a precious Flower, amidſt the weeds of a Wilderneſs, and the brambles of a Deſert.—What, becauſe ſhe was born in a Romiſh Country, and bred a Papiſt, ſhall we exclude her from a place *among the great multitude, which no man can number, of all Nations and Kindreds and people and tongues, which ſtand before the Throne, and before the* LAMB. (Rev. vii. 9.)

THE principal advantages in the uſefulneſs of this Lady's life, above moſt others are—Firſt, that the whole is recent; many, even middle-aged perſons, may yet remember the noiſe her perſecutions made thro' Europe.—She was not ſecluded in a Convent—hid in a Cell—or buried in the Deſert.—but lived in communion and friendſhip with her fellow-creatures, without affecting any thing ſingular

or

or extraordinary.——She had the diſadvantages of title and rank, beauty and fortune; and the embarraſſments of huſband, children, and high relations.—Yet her ſoul glorioufly ſurmounted all—and triumphed over every impediment in her ſpiritual race.—Be rouſed by her example, and encouraged by her victory—God is the ſame God yeſterday, to-day and for ever.—What he gave her, he may beſtow upon thee—Go thou and do likewiſe.

THE LIFE
OF
LADY GUION.
PART I. CHAP. I.
BEING
THE INTRODUCTION.
ADDRESSED BY HER TO HER DIRECTOR.

AS you thought there were omiſſions of importance in the former narration of my wretched and uncommon Life, I willingly comply with your deſire, in giving you a more circumſtantial relation; tho' the labour ſeems rather painful, as I cannot uſe much ſtudy or reflection. My earneſt wiſh is to paint in true colours to your view, the goodneſs of God to me, and the blackneſs of my own ingratitude---but this is impoſſible; numberleſs little circumſtances have eſcaped my memory, and you are unwilling I ſhould give you a minute account of my ſins. I ſhall however try to leave as few faults as poſſible, and depend on your aſſurances,* of keeping it from the public, and of deſtroying it, when your ſoul hath drawn thoſe ſpiritual advantages therefrom, which God intended,

* As ſhe advances in the work, ſhe ſeems as if ſhe thought it might be made public.

and for which purpoſe I am willing to ſacrifice all things, being fully perſuaded of his deſigns towards you, as well for the ſanctification of others, as yourſelf.

BUT let me aſſure you, this is not attained, ſave thro' pain, wearineſs, and labour; and a path that will wonderfully diſappoint your expectations; however, provided you be fully convinced, that it is on the NOTHING in man that God eſtabliſhes his greateſt works, you will be in part guarded againſt diſappointment or ſurprize. It ſhould ſeem, as tho' he deſtroyed that he might build; for when he is about to rear his ſacred temple in us, he firſt totally razes that vain and pompous edifice, which human art and power had erected, and from its horrible ruins, a new ſtructure is formed, by *his* power only.

OH that you could comprehend the depth of this myſtery, and conceive the ſecrets of the conduct of God, *revealed to Babes, but hid from the wiſe and great* of this world, who think themſelves the Lords counſellors, and capable of inveſtigating his procedures, and ſuppoſe they have attained that divine wiſdom *hidden from the eyes of all living*, in Self, and in their own works and *kept cloſe from the fowls of the air*; from thoſe, who by a lively genius and elevated faculties mount up to heaven, and think to comprehend the height and depth and length and breadth of God.

THIS divine wiſdom is unknown, even to thoſe who paſs in the world for perſons extraordinary in illumination and knowledge. To whom then is ſhe known, and who can tell us any tidings concerning her? *Deſtruction and Death* aſſure us, that they have heard with their ears of her fame and renown.

nown. It is then in dying to all things, and in being truely loſt to their concerns, to paſs on forward into God, and exiſt only *in Him*, that we attain to ſome knowledge of the true wiſdom. Oh how little are her ways known, and her dealings with her moſt choſen ſervants! Scarce do we diſcover any thing thereof, but ſurprized at the diſſimilitude betwixt the truth we thus diſcover, and our former ideas of it, we cry out with St. Paul, *Oh the depth of the knowledge and wiſdom of God! how unſearchable are his judgements, and his ways paſt finding out.* He judgeth not of things as men do, who call good evil and evil good, and account that as righteouſneſs which is abominable in his ſight, and which according to the Prophet, he regards no more than filthy rags. He will enter into ſtrict judgment which theſe Self-righteous, and they ſhall, like the Phariſees, be rather ſubjects of his wrath, than objects of his love, or inheritors of his rewards; doth not Chriſt himſelf aſſure us, that "except our righteouſneſs exceed that of the Scribes and Phariſees we ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven." And which of us even approach them in righteouſneſs: or if we live in the practiſe of virtues, tho' much inferior to their's, are we not ten fold more Oſtentatious? who is not pleaſed to behold himſelf righteous in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others? or who is it doubts that ſuch righteouſneſs is ſufficient to pleaſe God? yet we may ſee the indignation of our Lord, and his fore-runner manifeſted againſt ſuch. He who was the perfect pattern of tenderneſs and meekneſs, yet ſuch as flowed from the depth of the heart, and not that affected meekneſs, which under the form of a dove, hides the hawk's heart: He appears ſevere only to theſe ſelf-righteous, and publicly diſhonoured them: in what ſtrange colours does he repreſent them, while he beholds the poor ſinner with mercy,

mercy, compaſſion and love, and declares that for *them only* he was come, *that it was the ſick who needed the phyſician*; and tho' the Saviour of Iſrael, he only *came to ſave the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of Iſrael.*

O THOU Source of Love! thou doſt indeed ſeem ſo jealous of the ſalvation thou haſt purchaſed, that thou doſt prefer the ſinner to the righteous! the poor ſinner beholds himſelf vile and wretched, is in a manner conſtrained to deteſt himſelf: and finding his ſtate ſo horrible, caſts himſelf in his deſperation into the arms of his Saviour, and plunges with faith into the ſacred bath of his Blood, and comes forth "white as wool:" Then confounded at the review of his diſordered ſtate, and overflowing with love for him, who having alone the power, had alſo the compaſſion to ſave him---the exceſs of his love is proportioned to the enormity of his crimes; and the fullneſs of his gratitude, to the extent of the debt remitted. Whilſt the ſelf-righteous relying on the many good works he imagines to have performed ſeems to hold ſalvation in his own hand, and conſiders Heaven as a juſt reward of his merits. In the bitterneſs of zeal he exclaims againſt all ſinners, and repreſents the gates of mercy as barred to them, and heaven as a place to which they have no pretenſions. What need have ſuch ſelf-righteous of a Saviour? they are already burdened with the load of their own merits. Oh how long will they bear the flattering load, whilſt ſinners diveſted of every thing, fly rapidly on the wings of faith and love into their Saviour's arms, who freely beſtows on them that which he has infinitely merited.

How full of ſelf-love are the former, and how void of the love of God? they eſteem and admire themſelves in their works of righteouſneſs, which they

they ſuppoſe the cauſe of their happineſs. Theſe works are no ſooner expoſed to the Sun of Righteouſneſs than it diſcovers all to be ſo full of impurity and baſeneſs, that it frets them to the heart; mean while the poor ſinner, Magdalene is pardoned, becauſe ſhe loves much, and her faith and love are accepted as righteouſneſs. The divine Paul who ſo well underſtood theſe great truths, and ſo fully inveſtigated them, aſſures us *that the faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteouſneſs!* This is truely beautiful: for it is certain all that holy Patriarchs actions were ſtrictly righteous; yet not ſeeing them as ſuch and being void of the love of them, and diveſted of ſelfiſhneſs, his faith was founded on the ſalvation to come by Chriſt. *He hoped in him even againſt hope itſelf*, and *this was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*, (Rom. iv. 18, and 22) a pure, ſimple and genuine righteouſneſs, merited by Chriſt, and not a righteouſneſs wrought by himſelf, and regarded as of himſelf.

You may imagine this a digreſſion wide of the ſubject I at firſt propoſed: but it leads inſenſibly to it, and ſhews, that God accompliſhes his work either in converted ſinners, whoſe paſt iniquities ſerve as a counterpoiſe to their elevation; or in perſons whoſe ſelf-righteouſneſs he deſtroys, by totally overthrowing the proud building they had reared on a ſandy foundation, inſtead of the Rock, CHRIST.

The eſtabliſhment of all theſe ends, which he propoſed in coming into the world, is effected by the apparent overthrow of that very ſtructure which in reality he would erect: for by means which ſeem to deſtroy his church, he eſtabliſhes it. How ſtrangely does he found the new law and give it a ſanction! the very legiſlator himſelf is condemned by the learned and great, as a malefactor, and at length

length dies an ignominious death. Oh that we fully underſtood how very oppoſite our ſelf-righteouſneſs is to the deſigns of God—it would be a ſubject for endleſs humiliation, and we ſhould have an utter diſtruſt in that which at preſent conſtitutes the whole of our dependance.

THIS being premiſed, it will be leſs difficult for you to conceive the deſigns of God, in the favours he has conferred on the moſt miſerable of creatures. From a juſt love of his ſupreme power, and a righteous jealouſy over mankind, who attribute to each other the gifts he himſelf beſtows upon them, it pleaſed him to take one of the moſt unworthy of the Creation, to make known that his graces are the effects of his will, not the fruits of our merits; that it is the property of his wiſdom, to deſtroy what is proudly built, and to build what is deſtroyed, to make uſe of *weak things to confound the mighty*, and to employ in his ſervice ſuch as appear vile and contemptible.

THIS he does in a manner ſo aſtoniſhing, as to render them the objects of the ſcorn and contempt of the world. It is not to draw the public approbation upon them, that he makes them inſtrumental in the ſalvation of others; but to render them the objects of their diſlike, and the ſubjects of their inſults; as you will ſee in the narrative of the life, you have ordered me to write.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

I WAS born the 18th of April 1648, my parents, particularly my father, was extremely pious, but to him it was in a manner hereditary, as many of his fore-fathers were Saints.

MY mother, in the 8th month was accidentally frighted, which cauſed an abortion, and it is generally imagined that a child born in that month cannot ſurvive; indeed I was ſo exceſſively ill, immediately after my birth, that all about me deſpaired of my life, and were apprehenſive I ſhould die without baptiſm; but perceiving ſome ſigns of recovery they ran to acquaint my father, who immediately brought a prieſt; but on entering the chamber they were told, thoſe ſymptoms which had raiſed their hopes were only expiring ſtruggles, and that all was now over.

*IF I had then died, I ſhould perhaps have never either known or loved my God, and this heart created only for thyſelf, without ever having had the bleſſedneſs of a ſingle moments union with thee, had been eternally baniſhed thy ſacred preſence.—O thou who art the Supreme Felicity! if I now deſerve thy hatred, and am hereafter a veſſel prepared for perdition, yet ſtill the conſolation remains, of my having once known and loved thee; of having once ſought and followed thee; and I am alſo con-

* Our author here adverts to the opinion commonly received in the Romiſh church; that children dying without baptiſm are not ſaved; from this error however, ſhe takes occaſion to break forth, into thoſe refinements of ſentiment, which tho' fooliſhneſs to the mere natural man, all real chriſtians cannot but admire.

foled

ſoled in my willingneſs, to embrace, thro' my attachment to thy Divine Juſtice, the eternal decree it may pronounce againſt me; for I love thy juſtice when it deals more rigorouſly with me than any other. Yea! I am ſo enamoured with thy Juſtice, and pure glory, that, regardleſs of myſelf or my proper intereſts, I take part with thee againſt myſelf, and where thou ſtrikeſt there will I ſtrike alſo. And tho' I ſhould have enjoyed the advantage of never having actually offended thee, had I died at that tender age, yet the pleaſure which ariſes on being ſacrificed to thee, thro' love; together with the bleſſedneſs of having once loved thee, far tranſcends the pain I feel in having ſince ſo often diſpleaſed thee.

I HAD no ſooner ſhown ſigns of life again, than I again relapſed, and remained ſo long in an uncertain ſtate, that it was ſome time before they could find a proper opportunity to baptize me, and I continued very unhealthy until I was two years and a half old, when they ſent me to the *convent of the *Urſulines*, where I remained a few months.

ON my return, my mother neglected to pay due attention to my education. She was not fond of daughters, and abandoned me wholly to the care of ſervants; and indeed I ſhould have ſuffered ſeverely from their inattention to me, had not thine all-watchful Providence been my protector; for thro' the livelineſs of my diſpoſition, I met with various accidents, and frequently fell into a deep vault that held our fire-wood; however, I always eſcaped unhurt.

* Children are educated in many of the French Convents as at our boarding-ſchools.

THE

THE Dutcheſs of *Montbaſon* came to the Convent of the Benedictines, when I was about four years old. She had a high friendſhip for my father, and obtained his permiſſion that I ſhould go to the ſame Convent; for ſhe took peculiar delight in my infant ſportiveneſs, and a certain ſweetneſs in my external deportment, with which God had endowed me: I accordingly became her conſtant companion.

I FELL into frequent and dangerous diſorders in this houſe, and remember to have committed conſiderable faults. I here had good examples before me, and being naturally well inclined I quickly followed them, when there were none to turn me aſide. I loved to hear God ſpoken of, to be at church, and dreſſed in a religious habit. One day I was told of the terrors of hell, which I imagined was merely to intimidate me, as I was exceedingly lively, and full of a little petulant vivacity, which they called wit; the ſucceeding night I dreamt of hell, and tho' I was ſo young, yet time has never ſince been able to efface the frightful ideas, which were then impreſſed upon my imagination: All appeared horrible darkneſs, where ſouls were puniſhed, and my place amongſt them was painted out. At this I wept bitterly, and cried, *Oh my God, if thou wilt have mercy upon me, and ſpare me yet a little longer, I will never more offend thee*—And thou didſt, O Lord, in mercy hearken unto my cry, and pour upon me ſtrength and courage to ſerve thee, in an uncommon manner for one of my age. I wanted to go privately to confeſſion, but being ſo little, the miſtreſs of the boarders carried me to the prieſt, and ſtayed with me while I was heard ſingly; but ſhe was much aſtoniſhed when I came to mention, that I had had ſuggeſtions againſt the faith, and the confeſſor began to laugh, and enquire

what

what they were. I told him that till then I had doubted there was ſuch a place as hell, and ſuppoſed my miſtreſs had ſpoken of it merely to make me good, but that now my doubts were all removed. After confeſſion my heart glowed with a kind of fervour, and at one time I felt a deſire to ſuffer martyrdom. The good girls of the houſe, to amuſe themſelves, and ſee how far this growing fervour would carry me, deſired I ſhould prepare. I found great fervency and delight in prayer on this occaſion, and was perſuaded that this ardour, which was as new as it was pleaſing, was a proof of Gods love; and this inſpired me with ſuch courage and reſolution, that I earneſtly beſought them to proceed, that I might thereby enter into thy ſacred preſence. But was there not latent hypocriſy here? did I not imagine that it was poſſible they would not kill me, and that I ſhould have the merit of martyrdom without ſuffering it. Indeed it appeared there was ſomething of this nature in it; for being placed kneeling on a cloth ſpread for the purpoſe, and ſeeing behind me a large ſword lifted up, which they had prepared to try how far my ardour would carry me. I cried, hold! it is not right I ſhould die without firſt obtaining my father's permiſſion. I was quickly upbraided with having ſaid this that I might eſcape, and that I was no longer a martyr. I continued long diſconſolate, and would receive no comfort; ſomething inwardly reproved me, for not having embraced that opportunity of going to heaven, when it reſted altogether on my own choice.

At my own ſollicitation, and on account of my falling ſo frequently ſick, I was at length taken home; but not without having met a variety of little croſſes, proportioned to my age. On my return, my mother having a maid in whom ſhe placed

placed a confidence, left me again to the care of ſervants. I muſt here mention a great fault, of which mothers are guilty, when under pretext of external devotions or other engagements, they ſuffer their daughters to be abſent from them: nor can I forbear condemning, that unjuſt partiality with which parents treat ſome of their children; it is frequently productive of diviſions in families, and even the ruin of ſome; whereas impartiality, by uniting children's hearts together, lays the foundation of laſting harmony and unanimity.

I WOULD I were able to convince parents, and all who have the care of youth, of the great attention they require, and how dangerous it is to let them be for any length of time from under their own eye, or to ſuffer them to be without ſome kind of employment. This negligence is the ruin of almoſt all females.—How many little Angels would we ſee, did not idleneſs and want of due reſtraint deſtroy every ſeed of virtue?

How greatly it is to be lamented, that mothers who are inclined to piety, ſhould pervert the means of ſalvation into their deſtruction, and commit the greateſt irregularities in purſuing that which ſhould produce the moſt regular and circumſpect conduct.

THUS becauſe they experience certain ſweetneſſes in prayer, they would be all day long at church; mean while their children are running to deſtruction at home: the means to glorify God moſt is to prevent what may offend him. What muſt be the nature of that ſacrifice which is the occaſion of ſin.—God ſhould be ſerved in his own way, not in ours. Let the devotion of mothers be ſo regulated as to prevent their daughters from

ſtraying: they ſhould treat them as ſiſters, not as ſlaves, and appear pleaſed with their little amuſements;—thus the children will delight in the preſence of their mothers inſtead of avoiding it; for if they find ſo much happineſs with them, they will not dream of ſeeking any elſewhere. But mothers frequently deny their children any liberties; therefore like birds conſtantly confined to a cage, they no ſooner find means to eſcape than off they go, and never more return; whereas in order to render them tame and docile when young, they ſhould be permitted ſometimes to take wing; but as their flight is weak, and cloſely watched, it is eaſy to retake them when they eſcape; and this little flight gives them the habit of naturally returning to their cage, which becomes an agreeable confinement. I believe young girls ſhould be treated in a manner ſomething ſimilar to this; mothers ſhould indulge them in an innocent liberty, but never loſe ſight of them.

To guard the tender minds of children from what is wrong, much care ſhould be taken to employ them in agreeable and uſeful matters; they ſhould not be loaded with food they cannot reliſh; milk ſuited to babes ſhould be adminiſtered to them, and not ſtrong meat, which may ſo diſguſt them, that when they arrive at an age wherein it would be proper nouriſhment, they will not ſo much as taſte it. Every day they ſhould be obliged to read a little in ſome good book, and ſpend ſome time in prayer, which muſt be ſuited rather to ſtir the affections than for meditation. Oh were this method of education purſued, how ſpeedily would all diſorder ceaſe! theſe daughters becoming mothers, would educate their children as they themſelves had been educated.

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PARENTS ſhould alſo avoid ſhewing the ſmalleſt partiality in the treatment of their children; it begets a ſecret jealouſy and hatred amongſt them, which frequently augments with time, and even continues until death. How often do we ſee ſome children the idols of the houſe, behaving like abſolute tyrants, and treating their brothers and ſiſters as ſo many ſlaves, according to the example of father and mother; and it happens many times, that the favourite proves a ſcourge to the parents, and the poor deſpiſed and hated one, becomes at length their whole conſolation and ſupport.

MY mother was very defective in the education of her children: She ſuffered me whole days from her preſence, in company with the ſervants, whoſe converſation and example were particularly hurtful to one of my docile diſpoſition. My mother's heart ſeemed wholly centered in my brother; ſo that I was ſcarcely ever favoured with the ſmalleſt inſtance of her tenderneſs or affection. I therefore voluntarily abſented myſelf from her: it is true, my brother was more amiable than I, but the exceſs of her fondneſs for him, made her blind even to my outward good qualities, and ſerved only to diſcover my faults, which would have been but trifling had proper care been taken of me.

CHAP. III.

MY Father, who loved me tenderly, ſeeing how little my education was attended to, ſent me to a convent of the *Urſulines*. I was then near ſeven years old; in this houſe were two half ſiſters of mine, the one by my father, the other by my mother. My father placed me under his daughter's care, whom I may affirm to be a perſon of the greateſt capacity, and moſt exalted piety, and excellently qualified for the inſtruction of youth. This was a ſingular diſpenſation, Oh my Lord! of thy providence and love towards me, and proved the firſt means of my ſalvation. She loved me tenderly, and her affection made her diſcover in me many amiable qualities, which thou of thy great goodneſs hadſt implanted in me: She endeavoured to improve theſe good qualities, and I believe that had I continued in ſuch careful hands, I ſhould have acquired as many virtuous habits, as I had afterwards contracted evil ones.

THIS good ſiſter employed her time in inſtructing me in piety, and in ſuch branches of learning as were ſuitable to my age and capacity. She had good talents, and improved them well, was frequent in prayer, and her faith as great and as pure as moſt. She denied herſelf every other ſatisfaction, to be with me, and to inſtruct me: Nay ſuch was her affection for me, that it made her find, as ſhe told me, more pleaſure with me than any where elſe.

IF I made her agreeable anſwers, more from chance than judgment, ſhe thought herſelf well paid for all her labour. In ſhort, under her care I ſoon

I ſoon became miſtreſs of moſt things ſuitable for me, inſomuch that many grown perſons, of rank and figure, could not have anſwered to the things which I did.

As my father often ſent for me home to ſee me, one time I found the Queen of *England* there. I was then near eight years of age. My father told the Queen's confeſſor, that if he wanted a little amuſement, he might entertain himſelf with me, and propound ſome queſtions to me. He tried me with ſeveral very difficult ones, to which I returned ſuch pertinent anſwers, that he carried me to the Queen, and ſaid to her, "Your Majeſty muſt have ſome diverſion with this child." She alſo tried me; and was ſo well pleaſed with my lively anſwers, and my manners, that ſhe demanded me of my father with no ſmall importunity, aſſuring him that ſhe would take particular care of me, deſigning me for maid of honour to the princeſs. But my father reſiſted ſo far as to diſoblige her. Doubtleſs it was God who cauſed his refuſal, and thereby turned off the ſtroke which might have probably intercepted my ſalvation: For being ſo weak as I was, how ſhould I have withſtood the temptations, and diſtractions of a court.

I went back to the *Urſulines*, where my good ſiſter continued her affection. But as ſhe was not the miſtreſs of the boarders, and as I was obliged ſometimes to go along with them, I contracted bad habits; I became addicted to lying, peeviſhneſs and indevotion, paſſing whole days without thinking on God; tho' he watched continually over me, as the ſequel will manifeſt. I did not remain long under the power of ſuch vicious habits; for my ſiſter's care recovered me. I loved much to hear of God, was not weary of church, loved to pray, had tenderneſs for the poor, and a

natural diſlike for perſons whoſe doctrine was judged unſound; having ſucked in, with my milk, the purity of the faith: And God has always continued to me that grace, in the midſt of my greateſt infidelities.

THERE was at the end of the garden a little chapel dedicated to the child JESUS. To which I betook myſelf for devotion; and, for ſome time, carrying my breakfaſt thither every morning, hid it all behind his image; for I was ſo much a child, that I thought I made a conſiderable ſacrifice in depriving myſelf of it. Being alſo delicate in my choice of food, I wiſhed to mortify myſelf; but found ſelf-love ſtill too prevalent, to ſubmit to ſuch mortification. After this when they were cleaning out this chapel, they found behind the image what I had left there, and preſently gueſſed that it was I, as they had ſeen me every day going thither: And God, who lets nothing paſs without a recompence, ſoon rewarded me with intereſt for this little infantine devotion.

I CONTINUED ſome time longer with my ſiſter, where I retained the love and fear of God, My life was eaſy; I was educated agreeably with her. I improved much in the time I had my health; for very often was I ſick, and ſeized with maladies as ſudden as uncommon: In the evening well, and in the morning ſwelled and full of blueiſh marks, ſymptoms of a fever which ſoon followed. At nine years of age, I was taken with ſo violent a fit of throwing up blood, that they thought I was going to die: I was rendered exceedingly weak thereby.

A LITTLE before this ſevere fit, my other ſiſter became jealous, wanting to have me in her turn. Tho' ſhe led a good life, yet ſhe had not a talent for

for the education of children. I may ſay, that was the period of my happineſs in this houſe. At firſt ſhe careſſed me much; but all her careſſes made no impreſſion on my heart. My other ſiſter did more with a look, than ſhe with either careſſes or threatenings. As ſhe ſaw that I loved her not ſo well as the other, ſhe changed her fondling to rigorous treatment. She would not allow me to ſpeak to my other ſiſter; and when ſhe knew I had ſpoke to her, ſhe got me whipt, or elſe beat me herſelf. I could no longer hold out againſt ſuch ſevere uſage, and therefore requited with ingratitude all the favours of my paternal ſiſter, going no more to ſee her: Which yet did not hinder her from giving me marks of her uſual goodneſs, in the great malady I mentioned above. She kindly conſtrued my ingratitude to be rather owing to my fear of chaſtiſement, than to a bad heart. Indeed I believe this was the only inſtance in which fear of chaſtiſement operated ſo very powerfully upon me, for from that time I was naturally led to ſuffer more in occaſioning pain to one I loved, than in ſuffering myſelf at their hand. Thou knoweſt, Oh my Beloved! that it was not the dread of thy chaſtiſements that ſunk deep, either on my underſtanding or my heart; it was the ſorrow for offending thee, which ever conſtituted the whole of my diſtreſs, and it was ſuch that I imagine, tho' there were neither heaven or hell, I ſhould always have retained the ſame fear of diſpleaſing thee. Thou knoweſt that after my faults, when in forgiving mercy thou wert pleaſed to viſit my ſoul, thy careſſes were a thouſand fold more inſupportable than thy rod.

MY father being informed of all that paſſed, took me home again. I was at that time near ten years of age. I ſtayed only a little while at home;

for a nun of the order of St. *Dominic*, of a great family, and one of my fathers intimate friends, ſollicited him to place me in her convent, of which ſhe was the prioreſs, promiſing ſhe would take care of me herſelf, and make me lodge in her own chamber; for this lady had conceived a great affection for me. But ſhe was ſo much taken up with her community, in which many troubleſome affairs fell out, that ſhe was not at liberty to take much care of me. Here I had the chicken-pox, which made me keep my bed three weeks, in which I had very bad attendance, tho' my father and mother thought I was under excellent care. The ladies of the houſe had ſuch a dread of the ſmall-pox, as they imagined mine to be, that they durſt not come near me. I paſſed almoſt all the time without ſeeing any body, but a lay-ſiſter, who only brought me my allowance of diet at the ſet hours, and then immediately went off again. I providentially found a bible in my chamber, and having both a fondneſs for reading and a happy memory, I ſpent whole days in reading it from morning to night, and learned entirely the hiſtorical part. Yet I was really very unhappy in this houſe: For the other boarders, being big girls, plagued me with very grievous perſecutions. I was ſo much neglected, as to meat and drink, that I fell away, and became quite emaciated. Several other croſſes I had, which were hard enough for me to bear.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER having been here about eight months, my father took me home again. My mother kept me more with her, beginning now to have a higher regard for me than before; yet ſhe ſtill preferred my brother, which was ſo viſible, that every one ſpoke of it with diſlike; for when I was ſick, and met with any thing I liked, he demanded it; it was then taken from me, and given to him, tho' he was perfectly well in health. He was continually giving me new vexations. One day he made me mount upon the top of the coach; when he had done that, he threw me down on the ground; and by the fall I was bruiſed. At other times he beat me: But whatever he did, however wrong, was winked at, or had the moſt favourable conſtruction put upon it. This conduct ſoured my temper: I had little diſpoſition to do good, ſaying, "I was never the better for it." It was not then for thee alone, oh God, that I did good; ſince I ceaſed to do it, when it met not with ſuch a reception from others as I wanted. Had I known how to make a right uſe of this thy crucifying conduct towards me, I ſhould have made a good progreſs. Far from turning me out of the way, it would have made me turn more wholly to thee. With jealous eyes I looked on my brother, ſeeing the wide difference made betwixt him and me. Whatever he did, he always did well; but the blame of all fell on me. My ſiſters by the mother made their court to her, by careſſing him, and falling foul on me. It is true, I was bad: I was relapſed into my former faults of lying and peeviſhneſs. With all theſe faults, I was very tender and charitable to the poor, prayed to God aſſiduouſly,

ouſly, loved to hear any ſpeak of him, and to read good books.

I MAKE no doubt, ſir, that you will be amazed at ſuch a ſeries of inconſiſtencies: but what ſucceeds, will ſurprize you yet more, when you ſee this manner of acting gain ground with my years, and that as my reaſon ripened it was ſo far from correcting ſuch irrational conduct, that ſin grew more powerful in me. O my God, thy grace ſeemed to be redoubled in proportion to the increaſe of my ingratitude. It was with me as with a city beſieged, thou didſt ſurround my heart, and I only ſtudied how to defend myſelf againſt thine attacks, I raiſed fortifications about the wretched place, adding every day to the number of mine iniquities, to prevent thy taking it. And when there was an appearance of thy becoming victorious, over this ungreatful heart, I raiſed a counter-battery, and threw up ramparts to keep off thy goodneſs, and to hinder the courſe of thy grace: none other could have conquered than thyſelf. Oh my Divine Love! whoſe ſaced fire, was ſtronger than that ſtate of death, into which ſin had ſo often reduced me.

I CANNOT bear to hear it ſaid, "We are not free "to reſiſt grace." I have made too long and fatal an experience of my liberty. I cloſed up all the avenues of my heart, that I might not ſo much as hear that ſecret voice of God, which was calling me to himſelf. I have indeed, from my tendereſt youth, paſſed thro' a ſeries of grievances, either by maladies or by perſecutions. The girl to whoſe care my mother left me, in dreſſing my head uſed to beat me, and did not make me turn it but with rage and blows. Every thing ſeemed in concert to puniſh me, but this inſtead of making me turn unto

unto thee, Oh my God! only ſerved to afflict and embitter my mind. My father knew nothing of all this; for his love to me was ſuch that he would not have ſuffered it. I loved him much, but at the ſame time I feared him, ſo that I told him nothing of it. My mother was often teazing him with complaints of me, to which he made no other reply than, "There are twelve hours in the day; "ſhe'll grow wiſer." This rigorous proceeding was not the worſt for my ſoul, tho' it ſoured my temper, which was otherwiſe very mild and eaſy. But what cauſed my greateſt hurt was, that not being able to endure thoſe who treated me ill, I choſe to be among thoſe who carreſſed me, in order to corrupt and ſpoil me.

My father, ſeeing I was now grown pretty tall, placed me in Lent among the *Urſulines*, to receive my firſt communion at *Eaſter*, at which time I was to complete my eleventh year. And here my moſt dear ſiſter under whoſe inſpection my father placed me, redoubled her cares, to cauſe me to make the beſt preparation poſſible for this act of devotion. I thought now of giving myſelf to God in good earneſt. I often felt a combat between my good inclinations and my bad habits. I even did ſome penances. As I was almoſt always with my ſiſter, and as the boarders in her claſs, which was the firſt, were very reaſonable and civil, I became ſuch alſo, while among them. It had been murder to educate me badly; for my very nature was ſtrongly diſpoſed to goodneſs, and I loved every thing that tended thereto. Eaſily won with mildneſs, I did with pleaſure whatever my good ſiſter deſired. At length *Eaſter* arrived, and I received the communion (which was preceded by a general confeſſion) with much joy and devotion. And in this

this houſe I ſtayed 'till *Whitſuntide*. But as my other ſiſter was miſtreſs of the ſecond claſs, ſhe demanded me in her week, to be with her in that claſs. Her manners, ſo oppoſite to the other's, made me relax my former piety. I felt no more that new and delightful ardour which had ſeized my heart at my firſt communion. Alas! it held but a ſhort time; for my faults and failings were ſoon reiterated, and drew me off from the care and duties of religion.

As I now grew very tall for my age, and more to my mother's liking than before, ſhe took care to deck and dreſs me out, to make me ſee company, and to take me abroad with her. She took an inordinate pride in that beauty with which God had formed me, only to bleſs and praiſe him, which was however perverted by me into a ſource of pride and vanity. Several ſuitors offered to me. But as I was not yet twelve years of age, my father would not liſten to any propoſals. I loved reading much, and ſhut myſelf up alone every day to read without interruption.

WHAT proved effectual to gain me over entirely to God, at leaſt for a time, was that a nephew of my father's paſſed by our houſe, going on a miſſion to *Cochinchina*. I happened at that time to be gone a walking with my companions, which I ſeldom did. At my return he was gone. They gave me an account of his ſanctity, and the things he had ſaid. I was ſo touched therewith, that I was overcome with ſorrow. I cried all the reſt of the day and of the night. Early in the morning, I went in great diſtreſs to ſeek my confeſſor. I ſaid to him, "What my father, am I the only perſon in our "family to be loſt? Alas! help me in my ſalva- "tion." He was greatly ſurprized to ſee me ſo much

much afflicted, and comforted me in the beſt manner he could, not thinking me ſo bad as I was; for in the midſt of my backſlidings I was docile, punctual in obedience, careful to confeſs often; and ſince I went to him my life was more regular. Oh thou God of love, how often haſt thou knocked at the door of my heart! how often terified me with appearances of ſudden death! Yet all theſe only made a tranſient impreſſion. I preſently returned again to my infidelities; but this time thou didſt take, and I may ſay quite carried off my heart. Alas, what grief I now ſuſtained for having diſpleaſed thee! what regrets, what exclamations, what ſobbings! Who would have thought, to ſee me, but that my converſion would have laſted as long as my life? Why didſt thou not, Oh my God, utterly take this heart to thyſelf, when I gave it to thee ſo fully; or if thou didſt take it then, oh why didſt thou let it revolt again afterward? Thou waſt ſurely ſtrong enough to hold it, but thou would'ſt perhaps, in leaving me to myſelf diſplay thy mercy, that the depth of my iniquity might ſerve as a trophy to thy goodneſs.

I immediately applied myſelf to every part of my duty. I made a general confeſſion with great compunction of heart. I frankly confeſſed all that I knew with torrents of tears. I became ſo changed that I was ſcarce to be known. I would not for ever ſo much have made the leaſt voluntary ſlip; and they found not any matter for abſolution when I confeſſed. I diſcovered the very ſmalleſt faults: And God did me the favour to enable me to conquer myſelf in many things. There were left only ſome remains of paſſion, which gave me ſome trouble to conquer: But as ſoon as I had by means thereof, given any diſpleaſure, even to the domeſtics, I begged their pardon, in order to ſubdue

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at the ſame time, my wrath and pride; for *wrath* is the daughter of *pride*. A perſon truely humbled ſuffers not any thing to put him in a rage. As it is pride which dies the laſt in the ſoul, ſo it is paſſion which is laſt deſtroyed in the outward conduct. A ſoul thoroughly annihilated, or dead to itſelf, finds nothing of rage left.

THERE are perſons who, being very much filled with the unction of grace, and with a tranquil peace, at their entrance of the reſigned path of light and love, think they are come thus far: But they are greatly miſtaken. This they will readily diſcover, if they are heartily willing to examine two things; firſt if their nature is lively, warm and violent, (for I ſpeak not of ſtupid tempers) they will find, from time to time, that they make ſlips, in which trouble and emotion have ſome ſhare; and which even then are uſeful to humble and annihilate them. (But when annihilation is perfected all paſſion is gone, for it is incompatible with the ſtate.) Moreover they will find that there often riſes in them certain motions of anger, but the ſweetneſs of grace holds them back by a ſecret violence: They would eaſily tranſgreſs, if in any wiſe they gave way to theſe motions: There are perſons who think themſelves very mild, becauſe nothing thwarts them: It is not of ſuch that I am ſpeaking; for the mildneſs, which has never been put to the proof, is often only counterfeit. Thoſe perſons who, when unmoleſted appeared Saints, are no ſooner exerciſed by vexing occurrences, than there ſtarts up in them a ſtrange number of faults, which they had thought to be dead; and which only lay dormant, becauſe nothing awaked them.

I FOL-

I FOLLOWED my religious exerciſes. I ſhut myſelf up all the day to read and to pray. I gave all I had to the poor, taking even linen to their houſes to make them neceſſaries. I taught them the catechiſm; and, when my parents dined abroad, I made them eat with me, and ſerved them with great reſpect. I read the works of *St. Francis de Sales* and the life of *Madam de Chantal*. There I firſt learnt what mental prayer was, and I beſought my confeſſor to teach me that kind of prayer, but as he did not, I uſed my own endeavours to practiſe it tho' without ſucceſs, as I then thought, becauſe I could not exerciſe the imagination; and perſuaded myſelf, that that prayer could not be made without forming to one's ſelf certain ideas and reaſoning much. This difficulty gave me no ſmall trouble, and that for a long time. I was nevertheleſs very aſſiduous therein, and prayed earneſtly to God to give me the gift of prayer. All that I ſaw writ in the life of *M. de Chantal* charmed me; and I was ſo mere a child, that I thought I ought to do every thing that I ſaw in it. All the vows ſhe had made I made alſo, as that of ever aiming at the higheſt perfection, and of doing the will of God in every thing. One day as I was reading that ſhe had put the name of JESUS on her heart, to follow the counſel of the ſpouſe "Set me as a ſeal upon thy heart," and that for this purpoſe, ſhe had taken a red hot iron, whereupon that holy name was engraven, I was very much afflicted that I could not do the ſame. I took it in my head to write that ſacred and adorable name, in large characters, on a piece of paper. With ribbands and a big needle I faſtened it to my ſkin in four places; and in that poſition it continued a long time.

AFTER this, I turned all my thoughts to become a nun, very often going to *the viſitation*; for the love which

which I had for St. *Francis de Sales* did not permit me to think of any other community than this of which he was the founder. I frequently went to beg the nuns there to receive me into their convent. Often I ſtole out of my father's houſe to go thither and repeatedly ſolicited them to conſent to my admiſſion. But, tho' it was what they eagerly deſired, even as a temporal advantage; yet they never durſt let me enter their houſe, as they very much feared my father, whoſe fondneſs for me they were no ſtrangers to. There was then at that houſe a niece of my father's, to whom I am under great obligations. Fortune had not been very favourable to her father, and had thereby reduced her in ſome ſort to depend on mine, to whom ſhe diſcovered my inclination; who, tho' he would not for any thing in the world have hindered a right vocation, yet could not hear of my deſign without ſhedding tears. But as he happened at this time to be abroad, my couſin went to my confeſſor, to deſire him to forbid my going to *the viſitation*. He durſt not however do it plainly, for fear of drawing on himſelf the reſentment of that community; for they already looked on me as their's. Yet I ſtill wanted to be a nun, and importuned my mother exceſſively to take me to that houſe; but ſhe would not do it, for fear of grieving my father, who was yet abſent, and ſhe ſtill referred me to his return. As I ſaw that I could not obtain from her what I deſired, I counterfeited her hand writing, and forged a letter in which ſhe beſought thoſe ladies to receive me; excuſing herſelf from coming with me on account of her illneſs: But the prioreſs, who was a relation of my mother's, and well acquainted with her hand, at once detected the forgery.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

NO ſooner was my father returned home, than he fell into a violent diſtemper. My mother was at the ſame time indiſpoſed in another part of the houſe. I was then all alone with him, ready to render him every kind of ſervice I was capable of, and to give him all the dutiful marks of a moſt ſincere affection: And I don't doubt but my aſſiduity was very agreeable to him. I went, unperceived by him, to empty his baſons; taking the time for it when the ſervants were not at hand; as well to mortify myſelf as to pay due honour to what JESUS CHRIST ſaid, that *he came not to be miniſtered to, but to miniſter*. When he made me read by him, I read with ſuch a heart-felt devotion that he was ſurpriſed at it. I remembered the inſtructions my ſiſter had given me, and the ejaculatory prayers and praiſes I had learned from her. She had taught me to praiſe thee, oh my GOD, in all thy works. All that I ſaw called upon me to render thee that homage. If it rained, I wiſhed every drop to be changed into love and praiſes. My heart was nouriſhed inſenſibly with thy love; and my ſpirit was inceſſantly engroſſed with the remembrance of thee. I ſeemed to join and partake in all the good that was done in the world, and could have wiſhed to have the united hearts of all men to love thee. This habit rooted itſelf ſo ſtrongly in me, that I retained it throughout my greateſt wanderings.

MY couſin aforementioned helped not a little, to ſupport me in theſe good ſentiments: For I was often with her, and loved her, as ſhe took great care of me, and treated me with much gentleneſs. Her

fortune being equal neither to her birth, nor her virtue, ſhe did with charity and affection what her condition obliged her to. My mother grew jealous, fearing I ſhould love my couſin too well, and herſelf too little. She who had left me in my young years to the care of her maids, and ſince that to my own, only enquiring if I was in the houſe, and troubling herſelf no further, now required me always to ſtay with her, and never ſuffered me to be with my couſin, but with very great reluctance. My couſin fell ill; ſhe took that occaſion to ſend her home, which was a ſevere ſtroke to my heart, as well as to that grace which began to dawn in me.

THO' my mother acted thus ſhe was a very virtuous woman. But GOD permitted it for my exerciſe. She was one of the moſt charitable women of her age. She not only gave away the ſurplus, but even the neceſſaries of the houſe. Never were the needy neglected by her. Never any wretch came to her without ſuccour. She furniſhed poor mechanics wherewith to carry on their work, and needy tradeſmen wherewith to ſupply their ſhops. From her I think I inherited my charity and love for the poor: For GOD favoured me with the bleſſing of being her ſucceſſor in that holy exerciſe. There was not one in the town, or its environs, who did not praiſe her for this great virtue. She has ſometimes given to the laſt piſtole in the houſe, tho' ſhe had ſo large a family to maintain, and yet did not fail in her faith.

MY mother's only care about me, had been all along to have me in the houſe; which indeed is one material point for a girl. And this habit, of being ſo conſtantly kept within, proved of great ſervice to me after my marriage, as I ſhall tell in its due courſe. It would have been better had ſhe kept

kept me more in her own apartment, with an agreeable freedom; and enquired oftner what part of the houſe I was in.

AFTER my couſin left me I continued for ſome time in thoſe ſentiments of piety I have mentioned. And GOD granted me the grace to forgive injuries with ſuch readineſs, that my confeſſor was ſurpriſed; as he knew that ſome young ladies had, out of envy, traduced me; and that I ſpoke well of them as occaſion offered. I was ſeized with a tertian ague, which laſted four months, in which I ſuffered much; yet during the time, was enabled to ſuffer with much reſignation and patience. In this frame of mind and manner of life I perſevered, ſo long as I continued the practice of mental prayer.

NEAR a twelvemonth after, we went to paſs ſome days in the country. My father took along with us one of his relations, a very accompliſhed young gentleman. He had a great deſire to marry me; but my father, who had reſolved not to give me to any near kinſman, on account of the difficulty of obtaining diſpenſations, put him off, without alledging any falſe or frivolous reaſons for it. As this young gentleman was very devout, and every day ſaid the office of the Virgin, I ſaid it with him; and to have time for it, left off prayer, which was to me the firſt inlet of evils. Yet I kept up for a long time, ſome ſhare of the ſpirit of piety; for I went to ſeek out the little ſhepherdeſſes, to inſtruct them in their religious duties; yet this ſpirit gradually decayed, not being nouriſhed by prayer. Hereby I became cold toward GOD: All my old faults revived; to which I added an exceſſive vanity. The love I began to have for myſelf, extinguiſhed what remained in me of the love of GOD.

I DID not wholly leave off mental prayer, without aſking my confeſſor's leave; I told him I thought it better to ſay the office of the virgin every day, than to practiſe prayer; as I had not time for both. I ſaw not that this was a ſtratagem of the enemy to draw me from GOD, and to entangle me inſenſibly in the ſnares he had laid for me; in truth I had time ſufficient for both, as I had no other occupations than what I preſcribed to myſelf. My confeſſor was eaſy in the matter; not being a man of prayer, he gave his conſent, to my great hurt.

OH my GOD, if the value of prayer were but known, the great advantage which accrues to the ſoul from converſing with thee, and what conſequence it is of to ſalvation, every one would be aſſiduous in it. It is a ſtrong hold into which the enemy cannot enter. He may attack it, beſiege it, make a noiſe about its walls; but while we are faithful, and hold our ſtation he connot hurt us. It is alike requiſite to dictate to children the neceſſity of prayer as of their ſalvation; but alas! unhappily, it is thought ſufficient to tell them that there is a heaven and a hell; that they muſt endeavour to avoid the latter and attain the former; and yet they are not taught the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt way of arriving at it. The only way to heaven is prayer; a prayer of the heart, which every one is capable of, and not of reaſonings which are the fruits of ſtudy, or exerciſe of the imagination, which, in filling the mind with wandering objects, rarely ſettle it; and inſtead of warming the heart with love to GOD, leave it cold and languiſhing. Let the poor come, let the ignorant and carnal come, let the children without reaſon and knowledge, let the dull or hard hearts which can retain nothing come to the

the practice of prayer, and they ſhall become wiſe. Oh ye great, wiſe and rich, Have ye not, a heart capable of loving what is proper for you, and of hating what is deſtructive? Love the ſovereign good, hate all evil, and ye will be truly wiſe. When ye love any one, is it becauſe ye know the reaſons of love and its definitions? No, certainly; Ye love becauſe your heart is formed to love what it finds amiable. And ſurely ye cannot but know that there is nought lovely in the univerſe but GOD: Know ye not that he has created you, that he has died for you: But if theſe reaſons are not ſufficient which of you has not ſome neceſſity, ſome trouble, or ſome misfortune? Which of you does not know how to tell his malady, and beg relief? Come then to this Fountain of all Good, without complaining to weak and impotent creatures, who cannot help you; come to prayer; lay before GOD your troubles, beg his grace, and above all that you may love him. None can exempt himſelf from loving; for none can live without a heart, nor the heart without love.

WHY ſhould any amuſe themſelves, in ſeeking reaſons for loving LOVE itſelf; Let us love without reaſoning about it; and we ſhall find ourſelves filled with love, before the others have learned the reaſons which induce to it. Make trial of this love, and you will be wiſer in it than the moſt ſkilful philoſophers. In love, as in every thing elſe, experience inſtructs better than reaſoning. Oh come then drink at this fountain of living waters, inſtead of the broken ciſterns of the Creature, which far from allaying your thirſt, only tends continually to augment it. Did ye once drink at this fountain, ye would not ſeek elſewhere for any thing to quench your thirſt; for while ye ſtill continue to draw from this ſource, ye would thirſt no longer

after the world: But if ye quit it, alas! the enemy has the aſcendant; he will give you of his poiſoned draughts, which may have an apparent ſweetneſs, but will aſſuredly rob you of life.

THUS, I forſook the fountain of living water when I left off prayer. I became as a *vineyard expoſed to pillage*, whoſe hedges torn down give liberty to all the paſſengers to ravage it. I began to ſeek in the creature what I had found in GOD. He left me to myſelf, becauſe I firſt left him; and it was his will by permitting me to ſink into the horrible pit, to make me feel the neceſſity I was in, of approaching him in prayer. Thou haſt ſaid, that *thou wilt deſtroy thoſe adulterous ſouls who depart from thee.* Alas! it is their departure alone which cauſes their deſtruction, ſince, in departing from thee, Oh Sun of Righteouſneſs, they enter into the regions of darkneſs and the coldneſs of death, from whence they would never ariſe, if thou didſt not reviſit them; if thou didſt not by thy divine light, illuminate their darkneſs, and by thy enlivening warmth, melt their icy hearts, and reſtore them to life.

I FELL then into the greateſt of all misfortunes; for I wandered yet further and further from thee, Oh my GOD, and thou didſt gradually retire from a heart which had quitted thee. Yet ſuch is thy goodneſs, that it ſeemed as if thou hadſt left me with regret; and when this heart was deſirous to return again unto thee, with what ſpeed didſt thou come to meet it. This proof of thy love and mercy, ſhall be to me an everlaſting teſtimony of thy goodneſs and of my own ingratitude.

I BECAME ſtill more paſſionate than I had ever been, as age gave more force to nature. I was frequently

quently guilty of lying; I felt my heart corrupt and vain; the ſpark of divine grace was almoſt extinguiſhed in me and I fell into a ſtate of indifference and indevotion; tho' I ſtill carefully kept up outſide appearances; and the habit I had acquired of behaving at church, made me appear better than I was. Vanity, which had been excluded my heart, now reſumed its ſeat. I began to paſs a great part of my time before a looking-glaſs. I found ſo much pleaſure in viewing myſelf therein, that I thought others were in the right who practiſed the ſame. Inſtead of making uſe of this exterior, which GOD had given me that I might love him the more, it became to me only the means of a vain complacency. All ſeemed to me to look beautiful in my perſon, but I ſaw not that it covered a polluted ſoul.—This rendered me ſo inwardly vain, that I doubt whether any ever exceeded me therein, but there was an affected modeſty in my outward deportment that would have deceived the world.

THE high eſteem I had for myſelf made me find faults in every one elſe of my own ſex. I had no eyes but to ſee my own good qualities, and to diſcover the defects of others. I hid my own faults from myſelf, or if I remarked any, yet to me they appeared little in compariſon of others. I excuſed, and even figured them to myſelf as perfections. Every idea I had of others and of myſelf was falſe. I loved reading to ſuch exceſs, particularly romances, that I ſpent whole days and nights at them; ſometimes the day broke whilſt I continued to read, inſomuch, that for a length of time I almoſt loſt the habit of ſleeping; I was ever eager to get to the end of the book, in hopes of finding ſomething to ſatisfy a certain craving which I found within me, but my thirſt for reading was only encreaſed the more I read.

Theſe books are ſtrange inventions to deſtroy youth: For if they cauſed no other hurt than the loſs of our precious time, is not that too much? I was not reſtrained, but rather encouraged to read them under this fallacious pretext, that they thought one to ſpeak well.

MEANWHILE, thro' thy abundant mercy, Oh my GOD, thou cameſt to ſeek me from time to time. Thou didſt indeed knock at the door of my heart, I was often penetrated with the moſt lively ſorrow and ſhed abundance of tears, I was afflicted to find my ſtate ſo different from what it was when I enjoyed thy ſacred preſence; but my tears were fruitleſs and my grief in vain. I could not of myſelf get out of this wretched ſtate. I wiſhed ſome hand as charitable as powerful would extricate me, but as for myſelf I had no power. If I had had any friend, who would have examined the cauſe of this evil, and made me have recourſe again to prayer, which was the only means of relief, all would have been well. I was (like the prophet) *in a deep abyſs of mire*, which I could not get out of. I met with reprimands for being in it, but none were kind enough to reach out a helping hand to free me: And when I tried vain efforts to get out, I only ſunk the deeper, and each fruitleſs eſſay made me ſee my own impotence, and rendered me more afflicted and miſerable.

OH! how much compaſſion has this ſad experience given me for ſinners, as it has taught me why ſo few of them emerge from the miſerable ſtate into which they have fallen; becauſe ſuch as ſee it only cry out againſt their diſorders, and frighten them with threats of future puniſhment. Theſe cries and threats at firſt make ſome impreſſion, and they uſe ſome weak efforts after liberty: But, after having

having experienced their inſufficiency, they gradually abate in their deſign; and loſe their courage for trying any more. And all that man can ſay to them afterwards is but loſt labour, tho' one preach to them inceſſently. When any for relief run to confeſs, the only true remedy for them is prayer; to preſent themſelves before GOD, as criminals; and to beg ſtrength of him to riſe out of this ſtate; they would then ſoon be changed, and brought *out of the mire and clay*. But the devil has falſely perſuaded the doctors and the wiſe men of the age, that, in order to pray, 'tis neceſſary firſt to be perfectly converted. Hence people are diſſuaded from it, and hence there is rarely any converſion that is durable. The devil is outrageous only againſt prayer, and thoſe that exerciſe it; becauſe he knows it is the true means of taking his pray from him. He lets us undergo all the auſterities we will, and neither perſecutes thoſe that enjoy them, nor thoſe that practice them. But no ſooner does one enter into a ſpiritual life, a life of prayer, but they muſt prepare for ſtrange croſſes. As all manner of perſecutions and contempts in this world are reſerved for that life.*

MISERABLE as the condition was to which I was reduced by my infidelities, and the little ſuccour I had from my confeſſor, I did not fail to ſay my vocal prayers every day, to confeſs pretty

* WE ſee in this paragraph that ſhe was, at the time of writing it, enlightened in a good degree to diſcover the emptineſs and deception of two of the articles impoſed by the Church of *Rome* as duties, viz. (1) The recourſe to confeſſors for the cure of inward trouble, and (2) The uſe of bodily auſterities; inſtead of both theſe, ſhe recommends the faithful application of the ſoul to Him who is Omnipreſent, and the only *phyſician of value*.

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often, and to communicate almoſt every fortnight. Sometimes I went to church to weep, and to pray to the bleſſed virgin to obtain my converſion. I loved to hear any one ſpeak of GOD, and would never tire with the converſation. When my father ſpoke of him, I was tranſported with joy; and when he and my mother went on any pilgrimage, and were to ſet off very early in the morning, I either did not go to bed the night before, or hired the girls to weak me timely. My fathers converſation at ſuch times was always of divine matters, which afforded me the higheſt delight, and I preferred that ſubject to any other. I alſo loved the poor, and was charitable, even whilſt I was ſo very faulty as I have deſcribed. How ſtrange may this ſeem, to ſome and how hard to reconcile things ſo very oppoſite *!

CHAP.

* HAVING ſpeedily paſſed over her childiſh years, chequered with the dangers incident to that age, in reſpect both of her perſon and her morals, her ſcene of life begins to appear more intereſting.

NOW blooming in youth, extolled for her beauty, admired of ſome, and envied of others, ſhe becomes expoſed (but for a ſhort ſpace) to the ſnares of the world, and of her own vanity co-operating with them.

SOON, ah ſoon! ſhe finds herſelf ſtopt in her career, ſnatched in her bloom, and involved in the miſeries of a matrimonial ſtate, not of her own choice, but impoſed on her by that of her parents.

WE are now about entering a chapter, the peruſal of which may even ſtrike the obdurate and inſenſible with ſome feelings of compaſſion for her early and ſudden change; no longer at liberty to range in life, and look around it, in order to make a choice of what might be agreeable to her; inſtead of that, chained down under ceaſeleſs oppreſſions, without hope of freedom, where every thing was perpetually dark, ſour and grating.

HER troubles indeed, through the goodneſs of GOD to her, took the beſt turn, as they induced her to have recourſe to him for his aſſiſtance to bear her hard lot; and to diſcharge every duty requiſite in it: Yet, certainly cruel is the conduct of parents, who, from ſordid views, force their children for life into what is ſo oppoſite to their peace. Tho' the Father of Mercies often ſanctifies troubles, yet he approves not our *doing evil that good may come of it*, or *committing ſin that grace may abound*.

CHAP. VI.

AFTERWARDS we came to *Paris*, where my vanity increaſed. No coſt was ſpared to make me appear to advantage. I was forward enough to ſhew myſelf and expoſe my pride, in making a parade of this vain beauty, wanting to be loved of every one and to love none. Several apparently advantageous offers of marriage were made for me; but GOD, unwilling to have me loſt, did not permit matters to ſucceed. My father ſtill found difficulties, which my all-wiſe Creator raiſed for my ſalvation; for had I married any of theſe perſons, I ſhould have been much expoſed, and my vanity would have had means of extending itſelf in a wider circle.

THERE was one perſon who had aſked for me in marriage for ſeveral years, whom my father, for family reaſons, had always refuſed. His manners were oppoſite to my vanity. Nevertheleſs, a fear leſt I ſhould leave this country, together with

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the affluent circumſtances of this gentleman, induced my father, in ſpite of both his own and my mother's reluctance, to promiſe me to him; which was done without conſulting me. They made me ſign the marriage articles without letting me know what they were; tho' I was well pleaſed with the thoughts of marriage, flattering myſelf with a hope of being thereby ſet at full liberty, and delivered from the ill treatment of my mother, which I drew upon myſelf by my want of docility: Yet GOD ordered it far otherwiſe; and the condition which I found myſelf in afterwards, fruſtrated my hopes; as I ſhall ſhew in the ſequel.

How pleaſing ſoever marriage was to my thoughts, I was all the time, after my being promiſed, and even long after my marriage, in extreme confuſion, which aroſe from two cauſes: The firſt was my natural modeſty, which I did not loſe. I had much reſerve towards men. The other was my vanity; for tho' the huſband provided was a more advantageous match than I merited, yet I did not think him ſuch: And the figure which the others made, who had offered to me before, was vaſtly more engaging. Their rank would have placed me in view: And as I conſulted, in theſe things, nothing but my vanity, whatever did not flatter that, was to me inſupportable; yet even this very vanity was I think of ſome advantage to me; for it hindred me from falling into ſuch things as cauſe the ruin of families. I would not do any thing which, in the eye of the world, might render me culpable; ſo ſtrictly did I guard my exterior conduct. As I was modeſt at church, and had not been uſed to go abroad without my mother, and as the reputation of our houſe was great, I paſſed for virtuous.

I DID

I DID not ſee my ſpouſe elect (at *Paris*) till two or three days before our marriage. I cauſed maſſes to be ſaid all the time after my being contracted, to know the will of GOD; wiſhing to do it in this affair at leaſt. Oh goodneſs of my GOD, to bear with me at this time, and to allow me to pray to thee, with as much boldneſs, as if I had been one of thy friends, I who had rebelled againſt thee as thy greateſt enemy.

THE joy of our nuptials was univerſal thro' our village: Amidſt this general rejoicing, there appeared none ſad but myſelf. I could neither laugh as others did, nor even eat; ſo much was I depreſſed, tho' as yet I knew not the cauſe: But it was a foretaſte which God gave me of what was to befall me. The remembrance of the deſire I had of being a nun, came pouring in upon me. All who came to compliment me, the day after, could not forbear rallying me, becauſe I wept bitterly. I anſwered them; "Alas! I had deſired ſo much to "be a nun; why then am I now married? And by "what fatality has ſuch a revolution befallen me?" No ſooner was I at the houſe of my new ſpouſe, than I perceived that it would be for me *a houſe of mourning*.

I WAS obliged here to change my conduct; for their manner of living was very different from that in my father's houſe. My mother-in-law, who had long been a widow, regarded nothing elſe but œconomy; whereas at my father's houſe they lived in a noble manner, and great elegance; and what my huſband and mother-in-law called pride, and I called politeneſs, was obſerved there. I was very much ſurprized at this change, and ſo much the more, as my vanity wiſhed to increaſe, rather than to be diminiſhed.

AT

At the time of my marriage I was a little paſt fifteen years of age. My ſurprize increaſed greatly, when I ſaw I muſt loſe what I had acquired with ſo much application. At my father's houſe we were obliged to behave in a genteel way, and to ſpeak with propriety. There all that I ſaid was applauded. Here they never hearkened to me, but to contradict and find fault. If I ſpoke well, they ſaid it was to give them a leſſon: If any queſtions were ſtarted at my father's, he encouraged me to ſpeak freely on ſuch occaſions; here if I ſpoke my ſentiments, they ſaid it was to enter into a diſpute. They put me to ſilence in an abrupt and ſhameful manner, and ſcolded me from morning till night.

I SHOULD have ſome difficulty to give you an account of ſuch matters, which cannot be done without wounding charity, if you had not forbidden me to omit any one article, and if you had not poſitively enjoined me to lay open every thing, and to write down all the particulars. But I requeſt, before you proceed, not to look at things on the ſide of the creature, which would make theſe perſons appear worſe than they were; for my mother-in-law had virtue, my huſband had religion, and not any vice. It is requiſite to look at every thing on the ſide of GOD, who permitted theſe things, only for my ſalvation, and becauſe he would not have me loſt. I had beſide ſo much pride, that had I received any other treatment, I ſhould have continued therein, and ſhould not, perhaps, have turned to GOD, as I was afterwards induced to do, by the oppreſſion of a multitude of croſſes.

To return to my ſubject, my mother-in-law conceived ſuch a deſire to oppoſe me in every thing, that,

that, in order to vex me, ſhe made me perform the moſt humiliating offices; for her humour was ſo extraordinary, having never ſurmounted it in her youth, that ſhe could hardly live with any body. Saying no other than vocal prayers, ſhe did not ſee this kind of fault; or ſeeing it, and not drawing forces from the ſpirit of prayer, ſhe could not get the better of it: And it was a pity, for ſhe had both ſenſe and merit. I was then made the victim of her humours. All her occupation was to thwart me continually, and ſhe inſpired the like ſentiments into her ſon. They would make perſons far my inferiors, take place above me. My mother who had a high ſenſe of honour, could not endure that: And when ſhe heard of it from others (for I told her nothing of it) ſhe chid me, thinking I did it, not knowing how to keep my rank; and that I had no ſpirit; and upbraided me with many other things of that ſort. I durſt not tell her how it was with me; but I was almoſt ready to die with the agonies of grief and continual vexation. And what aggravated them all, was the remembrance of the perſons who had propoſed for me, the difference of their humour and manners, the love they had for me, with their agreeableneſs and politeneſs. All this made my preſent ſituation very doleful, and my burthen intolerable. My mother-in-law upbraided me in regard to my family, and ſpoke to me inceſſantly to the diſadvantage of my father and mother. I never went to ſee them, but I had ſome bitter ſpeeches to bear at my return.

ON the other hand my mother complained, that I did not come often enough to ſee her. She ſaid I did not love her, that I was alienated from my own family, by being too much attached to my huſband; ſo that I had a great deal of heavy ſufferings to undergo on both ſides.

WHAT

What ſtill further augmented my croſſes was, that my mother related to my mother-in law the pains I had coſt her from my infancy; After which they reproached me, ſaying, *I was a changeling and an evil ſpirit*. My huſband obliged me to ſtay all the day long in my mother-in-law's room, without any liberty of retiring into my own apartment, ſo that I had not a moment's reſpite to breathe a little. She ſpoke diſadvantageouſly of me to every body, to leſſen the affection and eſteem which ſome had entertained for me, and galled me with the groſſeſt affronts before the fineſt company. This had not the effect ſhe wanted; for the more patiently they ſaw me bear it, the higher eſteem they had for me.

Indeed, ſhe found the ſecret of extinguiſhing my vivacity, and rendering me ſtupid; ſo that ſome of my former acquaintance hardly knew me. Thoſe who had not ſeen me before, ſaid, "Is this "the perſon famed for ſuch abundance of wit? "She can't ſay two words. She is a fine picture." I was not yet ſixteen years old. I was ſo much intimidated, that I durſt not go out without my mother-in-law, and in her preſence I could not ſpeak. I knew not what I ſaid; ſo much fear had I of putting her out of humour, and drawing ſome bitter ſpeech on myſelf.

To compleat my affliction, they preſented me with a waiting-maid who was every thing with them. She kept me in ſight like a governeſs, and treated me in a ſtrange manner. For the moſt part I bore with patience theſe evils which I had no way to avoid: But ſometimes I let ſome haſty anſwer eſcape me, which was a ſource of grievous croſſes to me, and violent reproaches, for a long time

time together. When I went out, the footmen had orders to give an account of every thing I did. It was then I began to eat the bread of ſorrows, and to mingle my drink with my tears. At table they ſtill did ſomething to me, which covered me with confuſion. I could not forbear tears, and thence had a double confuſion, one for what they ſaid to me, and the other for not being able to refrain weeping. I had no one to confide in who might ſhare my affliction, and aſſiſt me to bear it. When I would impart ſome hint of it to my mother, I drew upon myſelf new croſſes, ſo that I reſolved to have no confidant of my trouble. It was not from any natural cruelty, that my huſband treated me thus; for he loved me even paſſionately, but he was warm and haſty, and my mother-in-law continually irritated him about me.

It was in ſo deplorable a condition, Oh my God, that I began to perceive the need I had of thy aſſiſtance: For this ſituation was ſo very perilous for me, as I met with none but admirers abroad, and ſuch as flattered me to my hurt, it were to be feared, leſt at ſuch a tender age, amidſt all the ſtrange domeſtic croſſes I had to bear, I might be ſeduced. But thou, by thy goodneſs and love gave it quite another turn. By theſe redoubled ſtrokes thou didſt draw me to thyſelf, and by thy croſſes effected what thy careſſes could not effect. Nay, even then thou madeſt uſe of my natural pride, to keep me within the limits of my duty. I knew that a woman of honour ought never to give ſuſpicion to her huſband. I was ſo very circumſpect on that head, that I often carried it even to exceſs, ſo far as to refuſe the hand to ſuch as in politeneſs, offered me theirs. There happened to me an adventure which, by carrying my prudence too far, had like to have ruined me;

for things were taken contrary to their intent: But my huſband was ſenſible of my innocence, and the falſhood of the inſinuations of my mother-in-law.

Such weighty croſſes, made me return to God. I began to deplore the ſins of my youth; for ſince my marriage I had not committed any voluntarily: Yet I ſtill had ſome ſentiments of vanity remaining, which I wiſhed not to have. However my troubles now counterballanced them. Moreover many of them appeared juſt to the little light I then had; for I was not yet illuminated to penetrate the eſſence of vanity: I fixed my thoughts only on its appearance. I tried to amend my life by penance, and by a general confeſſion, the moſt exact that I ever yet had made. I quitted all my romances, for which I lately had ſuch a fondneſs. Tho' ſome time before my marriage, it had been damped by reading the goſpel, I was ſo affected therewith, and diſcovered that character of truth therein, as to put me out of conceit with all the other books. They appeared then to me only full of lies and deceit. I now put away even indifferent books, to have none but ſuch as were profitable. I reſumed the practice of prayer, and endeavoured to offend my God, no more. I felt his love gradually recover the aſcendant in my heart, and baniſh every other. Yet I had ſtill an intolerable vanity, and ſelf-complacency, which has been my moſt grievous and obſtinate ſin.

My croſſes redoubled every day. What rendered them more painful was, that my mother-in-law, not content with the bittereſt ſpeeches, which ſhe uttered againſt me, both in public and private. She would break out in a paſſion about the ſmalleſt trifles, and ſcarcely be pacified for a fortnight together.

I paſſed part of my time in bewailing myſelf when I could be alone: And my grief became every day more bitter. Sometimes I could not contain myſelf, when I ſaw girls, who were my domeſticks, and owed me ſubmiſſion, treat me ſo ill. Nevertheleſs I did what I could to ſubdue my temper, which has coſt me not a little.

Such ſtunning blows ſo impaired the vivacity of my nature, that I became *like a lamb that is ſhearing*. I prayed to our Lord to aſſiſt me, and he was my refuge. As my age differed from theirs (for my huſband was twenty two years older than I) I ſaw well that there was no probability of changing their humours, which were fortified with years: As I found that whatever I ſaid was offenſive, even thoſe things which others would have been pleaſed with, I knew not what to do. One day, weighed down with grief, about ſix months after I was married, being alone, I was tempted even to cut out my tongue, that I might no longer irritate thoſe who ſeized at every word with rage and reſentment —But thou O God didſt ſtop me ſhort and ſhewed me my folly. I prayed continually, I communicated, I wiſhed even to become dumb, ſo ſimple and ignorant was I. Tho' I have had my ſhare of croſſes, I never found any ſo difficult to ſupport, as that of perpetual contrariety, without relaxation; of doing all one can to pleaſe, without ever ſucceeding therein, but even ſtill offending by the very means deſigned to oblige, and being kept with ſuch perſons, in a moſt ſevere confinement, from morning till night, without ever daring to quit them. I have found that great croſſes overwhelm, and ſtifle all anger at once. But ſuch a continual contrariety irritates and ſtirs up a fourneſs at the heart. It has ſuch a ſtrange effect,

that it requires the utmoſt violence, of ſelf reſtraint not to break out into vexation and rage.

SUCH was my condition in marriage, rather that of a ſlave than of a free perſon. And for a new augmentation of my diſgraces, I perceived, four months after my marriage that my huſband was gouty. This malady, cauſed me many croſſes, both within and without. He had the gout twice this year, ſix weeks each time. Soon after it returned again; and he had it ſtill worſe than before. He was ſo much plagued with it, that he came no more out of his room, nor often out of his bed, which he uſually kept for ſeveral months. I carefully attended him, tho' ſo very young. I did not fail exerting myſelf to the utmoſt in my duty. But alas! all this did not gain me their friendſhip. I had not even the conſolation to know whether what I did was agreeable, I denied myſelf all the moſt innocent diverſions, to continue with my huſband; and did whatever I thought would pleaſe him. Sometimes he ſuffered me quietly, and then I eſteemed myſelf very happy: But at other times I ſeemed inſupportable. My particular friends ſaid, "I was of a fine "age indeed to be nurſe to an invalid, and that "it was a ſhameful thing that I did not ſet more "value on my talents." I anſwered them, "ſince "I had a huſband, I ought to ſhare his painful "as well as his pleaſing circumſtances." Beſides my mother, inſtead of pitying me, repremanded me ſharply for my aſſiduity about my huſband; aſſuring me that I ſhould render myſelf unhappy by it; and that he would afterwards demand, as a duty, what I now did out of virtue. But oh my GOD, how different were thy thoughts from theirs, what appeared *without* from what paſſed *within!* My huſband had that foible, that when any one ſaid

ſaid any thing to him againſt me, he flew into a paſſion at once. It was the conduct of providence over me: For he was a man of reaſon and loved me much. When I was ſick, he was inconſolable. I believe, had it not been for my mother-in-law, and the girl I have ſpoken of, I ſhould have been very happy with him: For moſt men have their paſſions; and it is the duty of a reaſonable woman to bear them peaceably, without irritating them more by croſs replies.

THESE things thou haſt ordered, oh my GOD, in ſuch a manner by thy goodneſs, that I have ſince ſeen, it was neceſſary for making me die to my vain and haughty nature. I ſhould not have had power to deſtroy it myſelf, if thou hadſt not accompliſhed it by an all-wiſe œconomy of thy providence. I prayed for patience with great earneſtneſs; nevertheleſs ſome ſallies of my natural liveline ſs eſcaped me, and vanquiſhed the reſolutions I had taken of being ſilent. This was doubtleſs permitted, that my ſelf-love might not be nouriſhed by my patience: For a ſlip of a moment cauſed me months of humiliation, reproach and ſorrow, and proved the occaſion of new croſſes.

CHAP. VII.

DURING the firſt year I did not make a proper uſe of my afflictions. I ſtill was vain. I ſometimes lied, to excuſe myſelf to my huſband and mother-in-law, becauſe I ſtood ſtrangely in awe of them. Sometimes I fell into a paſſion, their conduct appeared ſo very unreaſonable, and eſpecially their countenancing that moſt provoking treatment of the girl who ſerved me. For as to my mother-in-law, her age and rank rendered her conduct more tolerable. But thou, Oh my God, opened my eyes to ſee things in a very different light. I found in thee reaſons for ſuffering, which I had never found in the creature; I afterwards ſaw clearly and reflected with joy, that this conduct, as unreaſonable as it ſeemed, and as mortifying as it was, was quite neceſſary for me; for had I been applauded here as I was at my father's, I ſhould have grown intollerably proud. I had a fault common to moſt of our ſex, I could not hear a beautiful woman praiſed, without finding ſome fault in her, artfully cauſing it to be remarked, to leſſen the good which was ſaid of her. This fault of mine continued long, and was the fruit of groſs and malignant pride, and extravagantly extolling any one proceeds from a like ſource.

I BECAME pregnant of my firſt child, which induced them during the time to take great care of me, and my croſſes were thereby ſomewhat mitigated. Indeed I was ſo ill that it was enough to excite the compaſſion of the moſt indifferent. Beſide they had ſo great a deſire of having children to inherit their fortunes, that they were continually afraid leſt I ſhould any way hurt myſelf. Yet when

when I had advanced far in my pregnancy, this care and tenderueſs of me abated: And once, as my mother-in-law had treated me in a very grating manner, I had the malice to feign a cholic, to give them in my turn ſome alarm; but as I ſaw this little artifice gave them too much pain, I told them I was better. No creature could be more heavily loaden with ſickneſs than I was during my pregnancy. Beſide continual heavings, I had ſo ſtrange a diſtaſte, except for ſome fruit, that I could not bear the ſight of food. I had likewiſe continual ſwoonings and violent pains. I had a very ſore time in my delivery; and continued long weak. There was indeed ſufficient to exerciſe patience, and I was enabled to offer up my ſufferings to our LORD. I took a fever, which rendered me ſo weak, that after ſeveral weeks I could ſcarce bear to be moved, to have my bed made. When I began to recover, an impoſthume fell upon my breaſt, which was forced to be laid open in two places, which gave me great pain: Yet all theſe maladies ſeemed to me only a ſhadow of troubles, in compariſon of thoſe I ſuffered in the family; which far from diminiſhing daily increaſed, I was alſo ſubject to a very violent head-ach. Indeed life was ſo wearisome to me, that thoſe maladies which were thought mortal did not frighten me.

THIS lying-in ſet off my perſom, and conſequently ſerved to encreaſe my vanity, I was glad of being marked with regard. And, far from avoiding the occaſions thereof, I went to the public walks, (tho' but ſeldom;) and when in the ſtreets, I pulled off my maſk out of vanity, and drew off my gloves to ſhew my hands. Could there be greater folly? After falling into theſe weakneſſes, I uſed to weep bitterly at home; yet when occaſions offered, I fell into them again.

THERE happened in the family an affair of great conſequence, in regard to our temporals. The loſs was very conſiderable. It coſt me ſtrange croſſes for above a year, not that I cared for the loſſes which it cauſed. But I ſeemed to be the butt of all the ill humours of the family. It would require a volume to deſcribe all that I ſuffered during this time. With what pleaſure did I ſacrifice theſe temporals; and how often reſign myſelf to have begged my bread, if GOD had ſo ordered it! My mother-in-law was inconſolable. She bid me pray to GOD for theſe things; but to me that was wholly impoſſible. Oh my deareſt LORD! never could I pray to thee about the world, or the things thereof; nor fully my ſacred addreſſes to thy Majeſty with the dirt of the earth: No, I rather wiſhed to renounce it all, and every thing beſide whatſoever, for the ſake of thy love, and the enjoyment of thy preſence in that kingdom, which is not of this world. I wholly ſacrificed myſelf to thee, even earneſtly begging thee rather to reduce our family to beggary, than ſuffer it to offend thee. In my own mind I excuſed my mother-in-law, ſaying to myſelf, "if thou hadſt taken the pains to "ſcrape and ſave like her, thou wouldſt not be ſo "indifferent at ſeeing ſo much loſt. Thou enjoy-"eſt what coſt thee nothing, and reapeſt what "thou haſt not ſowed." Yet all theſe thoughts could not make me ſenſible to our loſſes. I even formed agreeable ideas of our going to the hoſpital. No ſtate appeared to me ſo poor and miſerable, which I ſhould not have thought eaſy, in compariſon of the continual domeſtic perſecutions I underwent. My father, who loved me tenderly, and whom I honoured beyond expreſſion, knew nothing of it. GOD ſo permitted it, that I ſhould have him alſo diſpleaſed with me for ſome time; for my mother

ther was continually telling him that I was an ungrateful creature, ſhewing no regard for them, but all for my huſband's family. Appearances were againſt me; for I did not go to ſee them near as often as I ſhould have done. But they knew not the captivity I was in; and what I was obliged to bear in defending them. Theſe complaints of my mother, and a trivial affair that fell out, leſſened a little my father's fond regard for me; but it did not hold long. My mother-in-law reproached me, ſaying, "No afflictions befell them "till I came into the houſe. All misfortunes came "along with me." On the other ſide, my mother wanted me to exclaim againſt my huſband, which I could never ſubmit to do.

WE continued to meet with loſs after loſs, the King retrenching a conſiderable ſhare of our revenues, beſides great ſums of money, which we loſt by *L'Hotel de Ville*. I could have no reſt or peace, in the midſt of ſuch great afflictions. I had no mortal either to conſole me, or to adviſe with. My ſiſter, who had educated me, had departed this life. She died two months before my marriage; and I had no confidence in any other.

I declare, that I find much repugnance in ſaying ſo many things of my mother-in-law, and yet more in what I mention of my huſband, as I doubt not but my own indiſcretion, my caprice, and the occaſional ſallies of a warm temper, drew many of the croſſes upon me. And, altho' I had what the world calls patience, yet I had neither a reliſh or love for the croſs, and hence I fell into ſo many faults. Their conduct towards me, which appears ſo unreaſonable, ſhould not be looked upon with worldly eyes; we ſhould look higher, and then we ſhall perceive, that it was directed by Providence

for

for my eternal advantage. Indeed I ſhould have yielded to the repugnance I felt, and been totally ſilent with regard to ther treatment of me, were it not in obedience to you Sir.

I now dreſſed my hair in the moſt moderate manner, never painted, and to ſubdue this vanity which ſtill had poſſeſſion of me, I rarely looked in the glaſs; my reading was confined to books of devotion, ſuch as *Thomas a Kempis*, and the works of St. *Francis de Sales*. I read theſe aloud for the improvement of the ſervants, whilſt the maid was combing me, and I ſuffered myſelf to be dreſſed juſt as ſhe pleaſed, which freed me from a deal of trouble, and took away the occaſions wherein my vanity uſed to be exerciſed. I knew not how things were; but they always liked me, and thought all well in point of dreſs.—If on ſome particular days I wanted to appear better, it proved worſe; and the more indifferent I was about dreſs, the better I appeared. How often have I gone to church, not ſo much to worſhip GOD as to be ſeen. Other women, jealous of me, affirmed that I painted; and told my confeſſor who chid me for it, tho' I aſſured him I was innocent. I often ſpoke in my own praiſe, and ſought to raiſe myſelf, by depreciating others: Yet theſe faults gradually decreaſed; for I was very ſorry afterwards for having committed them. I often examined myſelf very ſtrictly, writing down my faults and ſlips, from week to week, and month to month, to ſee how much I was improved or reformed. But alas! this labour, tho' fatiguing, was but of little ſervice, becauſe I placed moſt of my truſt in my own cares. I wiſhed indeed to be reformed, but my good deſires were weak and languid.

My

My huſband's abſence was ſo long, and in the mean time my croſſes and vexations at home ſo great, that I determined to go to him. My mother-in-law ſtrongly oppoſed it; but this once my father interfering, and inſiſting on it, ſhe let me go. At my arrival I found he had like to have died. Thro' vexation and fretting he was very much changed; for he could not finiſh his affairs, having no liberty to attend them, keeping himſelf concealed at the *hotel d Longueville*, where *Madam de Longueville* was extremely kind to me. But as I appeared publickly, he was in great fear leſt I ſhould make him known; in a rage he bid me return home; but love, and my long abſence from him, ſurmounting every other reaſon, he ſoon relented, and ſuffered me to ſtay with him. He kept me eight days, without letting me ſtir out of his chamber; 'till, fearing the effect of ſuch a cloſe confinement on my conſtitution, he deſired me to go and take a walk in the garden, where I met *Madam de Longueville*, who teſtified great joy on ſeeing me.

I CANNOT expreſs all the kindneſs I met with in this houſe. All the domeſtics here ſerved me with emulation, and applauded me on account of my poor miſerable perſon, and exterior deportment: Yet I was much on my guard, againſt paying too great attention thereto. I never entered into diſcourſe with any man when alone. I admitted none into my coach, not even my relations, unleſs my huſband were in it. Nor did I go into any man's coach. In ſhort, there was not any rule of diſcretion, which I did not duly obſerve, to avoid giving any ſuſpicion to my huſband, or ſubject of calumny to others. So much attention had I to a vain point of honour, and ſo little for the true honour, which is to pleaſe GOD. Every one ſtudied there how to contribute to divert or oblige me.

Out-

Outwardly every thing appeared agreeable, but chagrin had ſo much overcome and ruffled my huſband, that I had continually ſomething to bear. Sometimes he threatened to throw the ſupper out of the windows: But I ſaid to him, "he would then "do me an injury, as I had a keen appetite." I made him laugh, and laughed with him. This appeaſed him; and the manner in which I ſpoke diverted him. Before that, melancholy prevailed over all my endeavours, and over the love he had for me. But GOD both armed me with patience, and gave me the grace to return him no anſwer; ſo that the devil, who attempted to draw me into ſome offence, was forced to retire in confuſion, thro' the ſignal aſſiſtance of that grace.

I FELL into a languiſhing ſtate; I loved my GOD and was unwilling to diſpleaſe him, and I was inwardly grieved on account of that vanity, which ſtill I found myſelf unable to eradicate: theſe inward diſtreſſes, together with thoſe oppreſſive croſſes, which I had daily to encounter, at length threw me into ſickneſs; and as I was unwilling to incommode the *Hotel de Longueville*, I had myſelf moved to another houſe. The diſeaſe proved violent and extremely tedious, inſomuch that the phyſicians deſpaired of my life. The prieſt, who was a pious man, ſeemed fully ſatisfied with the ſtate of my mind, and ſaid, "I ſhould die like a ſaint." But my ſins were too preſent to my mind, and too painful to my heart, to have ſuch a preſumption. At midnight they adminiſtered the ſacrament to me, as they hourly expected my departure. It was a ſcene of general diſtreſs in the family, and among all that knew me. There were none indifferent to my death but myſelf, I beheld it without fear, and was rendered inſenſible to its approach. It was far otherwiſe with my huſband,

band, he was inconſolable, and in an agony of grief, when he ſaw there was no hope left; but I no ſooner began to recover, than notwithſtanding all his love his uſual fretfulneſs returned. I now recovered almoſt miraculouſly; and to me this diſorder proved a great bleſſing; for, beſide a very great patience under violent pains, it ſerved to inſtruct me much in my view of the emptineſs of all worldly things; it detached me from myſelf and gave me new courage to ſuffer better than I had yet done. The love of GOD gathered ſtrength in my heart, with a deſire to pleaſe and be faithful to him in my condition. I reaped ſeveral other advantages from it, which I need not relate. I had yet ſix months to drag along with a ſlow fever and hepatic flux. It was thought that would have brought me to my end. But thy time, Oh my GOD, was not yet arrived for taking me to thyſelf. Thy deſigns over me were widely different from the expectations of thoſe about me; it being thy determination to make me both the object of thy mercy and the victim of thy juſtice.

CHAP. VIII.

AFTER long languiſhing at length I regained my former health; about which time my dear mother departed this life, in great tranquility of mind; having, beſide her other good qualities, been particularly charitable to the poor. This virtue, ſo acceptable to GOD, he was graciouſly pleaſed to begin rewarding even in this life, with ſuch a ſpirit of reſignation, that though ſhe was but twenty-four hours ſick, ſhe was made perfectly eaſy about every thing that was near and dear to her in this world.—I now applied myſelf to my duties, never failing to practiſe that of prayer twice a day. I watched over myſelf, to ſubdue my ſpirit continually. I went to viſit the poor in their houſes, aſſiſted them in their diſtempers and diſtreſſes; and did (according to my underſtanding) all the good I knew. Thou, oh my GOD, increaſed both my love and my patience, in proportion to my ſufferings. I regretted not the temporal advantages with which my mother diſtinguiſhed my brother above me; yet at home they fell on me about that, as about every thing elſe. I was alſo very much diſtreſſed with a ſecond pregnancy, had for ſome time a tertian ague, and was very feeble. I did not indeed ſerve thee yet with that fervour which thou waſt pleaſed to give me ſoon after: For I would ſtill have been glad to reconcile thy love with the love of myſelf and of the creatures; and unhappily I always found ſome who loved me, and whom I could not forbear wiſhing to pleaſe; not that I loved them, but for the love I bore to myſelf.

A LADY,

A LADY, who was an exile, came to my father's houſe. He offered her an apartment in it which ſhe accepted, and ſtaid there a long time. She was one of true piety and inward devotion. She had a great eſteem for me, becauſe I deſired to love GOD, and employed myſelf in the exterior works of Charity. She remarked that I had the virtues of an active and buſtling life; but had not yet attained the ſimplicity of prayer which ſhe experienced. Sometimes ſhe dropped a word to me on that ſubject: But as my time was not yet come, I did not underſtand her. Her example inſtructed me more than her words. I obſerved on her countenance ſomething which marked a great enjoyment of the preſence of GOD. This I tried, by the exertion of ſtudied reflection and thoughts, to attain but with much trouble to little purpoſe. I wanted to have by my own efforts what I could not acquire but in ceaſing from all efforts.

MY Father's nephew, of whom I have made mention before, was returned from *Cochinchina*, to carry over ſome prieſts from *Europe*. I was exceeding glad to ſee him, well remembring what good his firſt paſſing by had done me. The Lady above mentioned was no leſs rejoiced than I; they underſtood one another immediately and converſed together in a ſpiritual language. The virtue of this excellent relation charmed me; and I admired his continual prayer without being able to comprehend it. I endeavoured to meditate, and to think on GOD without intermiſſion, to utter prayers and ejaculations, but could not acquire, by all my toil, what GOD at length gave me himſelf, and which is experienced only in ſimplicity. My couſin did all he could to attach me more ſtrongly to GOD. He conceived an exceeding great affection for me. The purity he obſerved in me from the corruptions

of

of the age, the abhorrence of ſin at a time of life when others are beginning to reliſh the pleaſures of it, (for I was not yet eighteen) gave him a great tenderneſs for me. I complained to him of my faults ingenuouſly; for theſe I ſaw clearly; but as the difficulties I found, of entirely reforming myſelf much abated my courage, he cheered and exhorted me to ſupport myſelf, and to perſevere in my good endeavours for it. He would fain have introduced me into a more ſimple manner of prayer, but I was not yet prepared for it.

I BELIEVE his prayers were more effectual than his words; for no ſooner was he gone out of my father's houſe, than thou, oh my divine Love! manifeſted thy favour to me. The deſire I had to pleaſe thee, the tears I ſhed, the manifold pains I underwent, the labours I ſuſtained, and the little fruit I reaped from them, moved thee with compaſſion. Such was the ſtate of my ſoul, when thy goodneſs, overpaſſing all my vileneſs and infidelities, and abounding in proportion to my wretchedneſs —— now granted me in a moment, what all my own efforts could never procure.——For beholding me rowing with ſuch laborious toil, the breath of thy divine operations turned in my favour, and carried me full ſail over this ſea of affliction.

I had often ſpoke to my confeſſor about the great anxiety it gave me to find I could not meditate, nor exert my imagination in order to pray. Subjects of prayer which were too extenſive, were uſeleſs to me; ſuch as were ſhort and pithy ſuited me better; but my confeſſor, I found, did not comprehend the matter, or underſtand my meaning.

AT

AT length, GOD permitted a very religious perſon, of the order of St. FRANCIS to paſs by my father's habitation. He had intended going another way, that was ſhorter and more commodious; but a ſecret power changed his deſign. He ſaw there was ſomething for him to do, and imagined that GOD had called him for the converſion of a man of ſome diſtinction in that country: But his labours there proved fruitleſs. It was the conqueſt of my ſoul which was deſigned. As ſoon as he arrived in our country, he came to ſee my father, who was rejoiced at his coming. At this time I was lying-in of my ſecond ſon, and my father dangerouſly ill, and expected to die. For ſome time they concealed his ſickneſs from me, on account of my condition; till an indiſcreet perſon abruptly told me. Inſtantly I aroſe, all weak as I was, and went to ſee him at the hazard of my life; and a dangerous illneſs it coſt me. My father was recovered, but not entirely; yet enough to give me new marks of his affection, I told him of the ſtrong deſire I had to love GOD, and my great ſorrow at not being able to do it fully. My father, as he had a great fondneſs for me, thought he could not give me a more ſolid indication thereof, than in procuring me an acquaintance with this worthy man. He told me what he knew of him, and urged me to go ſee him.

I MADE at firſt a difficulty of doing it, being intent on obſerving the rules of the ſtricteſt prudence. However, my father's repeated inſtances had with me the weight of a poſitive command. I thought I could not do that amiſs, which I only did in obedience to him. I therefore took a kinſwoman along with me, and

went. At firſt he ſeemed a little confuſed; for he was reſerved towards women. Being newly come out of a five years ſolitude, he was ſurprized that I was the firſt to addreſs him. He ſpoke not a word for ſome time. I knew not what to attribute his ſilence to. I did not heſitate to ſpeak to him, and to tell him in a few words, my difficulties about prayer. He preſently replied, "It is, Madam, becauſe you "ſeek WITHOUT what you have WITHIN. Ac- "cuſtom yourſelf to ſeek GOD in your heart, "and you will there find him."

HAVING ſaid theſe words, he left me. They were to me like the ſtroke of a dart, which penetrated thro' my heart. I felt at this inſtant, a very deep wound, a wound ſo delightful that I deſired not to be cured. Theſe words brought into my heart, what I had been ſeeking ſo many years; or rather they diſcovered to me what was there, and which I had not enjoyed for want of knowing it. Oh my Lord! Thou waſt in my heart, and demanded only a ſimple turning of my mind inward, to make me perceive thy preſence. Oh infinite Goodneſs! How was I running hither and thither to ſeek thee, my life was a burden to me, tho' my happineſs was within myſelf. I was poor in the midſt of riches, and ready to periſh with hunger, near a table plentifully ſpread, and a continual feaſt. Oh Beauty, antient and new! Why have I known thee ſo late! Alas! I ſought thee where thou waſt not, and did not ſeek thee were thou waſt. It was for want of underſtanding theſe words of thy goſpel, "The kingdom of GOD "cometh not with obſervation: neither ſhall "they ſay, Lo here, or lo there: For behold, "the

"the kingdom of GOD is within you." This I now experienced, For thou becameſt my King, and my heart thy kingdom, wherein thou didſt reign ſupreme, and performed all thy ſacred Will.

I TOLD this good man, "that I did not know "what he had done to me, that my heart was "quite changed, that GOD was there; for from "that moment he had given me an experience "of his preſence in my ſoul; not by thought "or any application of mind, but as a thing "really poſſeſſed after the ſweeteſt manner." I experienced thoſe words in the Canticles: "Thy "Name is as precious ointment poured forth; "therefore do the virgins love thee." For I felt in my ſoul an unction which, as a ſalutary balſam, healed in a moment all my wounds. I ſlept not that whole night, becauſe thy love, oh my GOD! flowed in me like delicious oyle; and burned, as a fire which was going to devour in an inſtant all that was left of *ſelf*. I was ſuddenly ſo altered that I was hardly to be known either by my ſelf or others. I found no longer thoſe troubleſome faults or reluctances. They all diſappeared, being conſumed, like chaff in a great fire.

I NOW became deſirous that the inſtrument hereof might become my director, preferable to any other. This good father, however, could not readily reſolve to charge himſelf with my conduct, though he ſaw ſo ſurprizing a change effected by the hand of GOD. Several reaſons induced him to excuſe himſelf; firſt my perſon, then my youth, for I was only nineteen years of age; and laſtly, a promiſe he had made

to GOD, from a diſtruſt of himſelf, never to take upon himſelf the direction of any of our ſex, unleſs GOD, by ſome particular Providence, ſhould charge him therewith. However, upon my earneſt and repeated requeſt to him to become my director, he ſaid he would pray to GOD thereupon, and deſired I ſhould do ſo too. As he was at prayer, it was ſaid to him, "Fear "not that charge; ſhe is my ſpouſe." When I heard this, it affected me greatly. "What (ſaid "I to myſelf) a frightful monſter of iniquity, "who have done ſo much to offend my GOD, "in abuſing his favours, and requiting them "with ingratitude; and now to be thus de-"clared his ſpouſe!"——After this he conſented to my requeſt.

NOTHING now was more eaſy to me than prayer. Hours paſſed away like moments, while I could hardly do any thing elſe but pray. The fervency of my love allowed me no intermiſſion. It was a prayer of rejoicing and poſſeſſing, devoid of all buſy imaginations, and forced reflections; it was a prayer of the Will, and not of the Head, wherein the taſte of GOD was ſo great, ſo pure, unblended and uninterrupted, that it drew and abſorbed the powers of my ſoul into a profound recollection, without act or diſcourſe. For I had now no ſight but of JESUS CHRIST alone. All elſe was excluded, in order to love with the greater extent, without any ſelfiſh motives or reaſons for loving.

THIS ſovereign power, the Will, abſorbed the two others the memory and underſtanding into itſelf, and concentered them in LOVE——not but that they ſtill actually ſubſiſted; but their ope-

operations were in a manner imperceptible and paſſive; for they were no longer ſtopped or retarded by the multiplicity, but collected and united in One.——So the riſing of the ſun does not extinguiſh the ſtars, but overpowers and abſorbs them in the luſtre of his incomparable Glory.

CHAP. IX.

SUCH was the prayer that was given me at once, which is far above extaſies, tranſports and viſions. All theſe gifts are leſs pure, and more ſubject to the illuſion or deceits from the enemy.

VISIONS are in the inferior powers of the Soul, and cannot produce true union——therefore the Soul muſt not dwell or rely upon them, or be retarded by them——they are but favours and gifts, 'tis the Giver alone muſt be our object and aim.

IT is of ſuch that St. PAUL ſpeaks, where he ſays, That "Satan transforms himſelf into an "angel of light." 2 Cor. 11. 18, which is generally the caſe with ſuch as are fond of viſions, and lay a ſtreſs on them: becauſe they are apt to convey a vanity to the ſoul, or at leaſt to hinder it from humbly attending to GOD only.

EXTASIES ariſe from a ſenſible reliſh, and may be termed a kind of ſpiritual ſenſuality, wherein the ſoul letting itſelf go too far, by reaſon of the ſweetneſs it finds in them, falls imper-

ceptibly into decay. The crafty enemy preſents ſuch ſort of interior elevations and raptures, for baits to trepan the ſoul; to render it ſenſual, to fill it with vanity and ſelf-love, to fix its eſteem and attention on the gifts of GOD, and to hinder it from following JESUS CHRIST in the way of renunciation, and of death to all things.

AND as to diſtinct interior words, they too are ſubject to illuſion; the enemy can form and counterfeit them: Or if they come from a good angel——(for GOD himſelf never ſpeaks thus) we may miſtake and miſapprehend them——for they are ſpoke in a divine manner, but we conſtrue them in a human and carnal manner

BUT the immediate word of GOD—has neither tone nor articulation.—It is mute, ſilent, and unutterable; for it is JESUS CHRIST himſelf the real and eſſential WORD—who in the center of the Soul, that is diſpoſed for receiving him, never one moment ceaſes from his living, fruitful, and divine operation.

——OH thou Word made Fleſh—whoſe ſilence is inexpreſſible eloquence—thou canſt never be miſapprehended or miſtaken;—thou becomeſt the Life of our Life, and the Soul of our Soul:—How infinitely is thy Language elevated above all the utterance of human and finite articulation. Thy adorable Power, all efficacious in the ſoul that has received it, communicates itſelf thro' them to others, and as a divine ſeed becomes fruitful to eternal life.

THE revelations of things to come are alſo very dangerous; for the devil can counterfeit them, as he did formerly in the heathen temples, where

where he uttered Oracles. Frequently they raiſe falſe ideas, vain hopes, and frivolous expectations; take up the mind with future events, hinder it from dying to ſelf, and prevent it following JESUS CHRIST in his poverty, abnegation, and death.

WIDELY different is *The Revelation of* JESUS CHRIST, *Gal.* 1. 16. mentioned by St. Paul. This is made to the Soul when the eternal Word is communicated. It makes us *new creatures, created anew in Him.* This revelation is what the devil cannot counterfeit. From hence proceeds the only ſafe tranſport or extaſy, which is operated by naked faith alone, and dying *even to the gifts of* GOD, how ſublime and excellent ſoever they may appear; becauſe as long as the ſoul continues reſting in them, it does not fully renounce itſelf, and ſo never paſſing into GOD, loſes the real enjoyment of the Giver, by attachments to the gifts. This is truly an unutterable loſs.

LEST I ſhould let my mind go after theſe gifts, and ſteal myſelf from thy love, oh my GOD, thou waſt pleaſed to fix me in a continual adherence to thy ſelf alone. Souls thus directed get the ſhorteſt way. They are to expect great ſufferings, eſpecially if they are mighty in faith, in mortification and deadneſs to all but GOD. A pure and diſintereſted love, an intenſeneſs of mind for the advancement of thy intereſt alone. —Theſe are the diſpoſitions thou didſt then implant in me, and even a fervent deſire of ſuffering for thee. The croſs, which I had hitherto born only with reſignation was now become

my delight, and the ſpecial object of my rejoicing.

CHAP. X.

I WRIT an account of my wonderful change, in point of happineſs, to that good father who had been made the inſtrument of it. It filled him both with joy and aſtoniſhment. Oh my GOD, what penances did the love of ſufferings induce me to undergo! I practiſed all the auſterities I could imagine: But they were all too weak to ſatisfy the deſire I had for ſuffering. Tho' my body was very delicate, the inſtruments of penance tore it without giving me pain enough, as I thought. I often kept wormwood in my mouth, and put coloquintida in my food; altho' I eat ſo little, that it was wonderful how I lived, being continually in extreme weakneſs. I was impelled to deprive myſelf of the moſt innocent indulgences: all that could gratify my taſte was denied it, and I took every thing that could mortify and diſguſt it, in ſo much that my appetite, which had been extremely delicate, was ſo far conquered, that at length I could ſcarcely prefer one thing to another.

I dreſſed loathſome ſores and wounds, and gave remedies to the ſick. At my firſt engaging in this ſort of employ, my ſtomach uſed to turn; and it was with the greateſt difficulty I was able to bear it. But as ſoon as my averſion ceaſed, and that I could ſtand the moſt offenſive things, other channels of employment were opened to me: For I did nothing of myſelf, but left myſelf to be wholly governed by my ſovereign in all things.

WHEN

WHEN that good father aſked me how I loved GOD, I anſwered, "Far more than the moſt "paſſionate lover his beloved; and that even "this compariſon was inadequate, ſince the love "of the creatures never can attain to this, "either in ſtrength or in depth." This love of GOD occupied my heart ſo conſtantly and ſo ſtrongly, that I could think of nothing elſe, as indeed I judged nothing elſe worthy of my thoughts.

THE good father above mentioned was an excellent preacher. He was deſired to preach in the pariſh to which I belonged. When I came, I was ſo ſtrongly abſorbed in GOD, that I could neither open my eyes, nor hear any thing he ſaid. I found that thy word, oh my GOD, made its own impreſſion on my heart, and there had its effect, without the mediation of words, or any attention to them. And I have found it ſo ever ſince, tho' after a different manner, according to the different degrees and ſtates I have paſſed through. So deeply was I ſettled in the inward ſpirit of prayer, that I could ſcarce any more pronounce the vocal prayers.

THIS immerſion in GOD abſorbed all things therein. I could no more ſee the ſaints, or even the Bleſſed Virgin, out of GOD; but I beheld them all in him. And tho' I tenderly loved certain ſaints, as St. PETER, St. PAUL, St. MARY MAGDALEN, St. TERESA, yet I could not form to myſelf images of them, nor invoke any of them out of GOD.

A FEW weeks after I had received that interior wound of the heart, which had begun my change,

change, was held the feaſt of the bleſſed virgin, in the Convent in which was that good father my director. I went in the morning to get the indulgences, which are then diſpenſed, and was much ſurpriſed when I came there, and found that I could not attempt it; tho' I ſtayed above five hours in the church. I was penetrated with ſo lively a dart of pure love, that I could not reſolve to abridge by indulgences the pains due to my ſins. "Oh my love! I cried, I am "willing to ſuffer for thee. I find no other plea- "ſure but in ſuffering for thee. Indulgences may "be good for thoſe who know not the value of "ſufferings, who chuſe not that thy divine juſ- "tice ſhould be ſatisfied; who, having mercе- "nary ſouls, are not ſo much afraid of diſplea- "ſing thee, as of the pains annexed to ſin." Yet, fearing I might be miſtaken, and commit a fault in not getting the indulgences, for I had never heard of any one being in ſuch a way before, I returned again to try to get them, but in vain; ſo not knowing what to do, I reſigned myſelf herein to our Lord; and, when returned home, writ to that good father an account of my diſpoſition and ſentiments, in ſuch a manner that, preaching that day, he made what I had writ a part of his ſermon, therein reciting it verbatim as I had wrote it.

I NOW quitted all companies, bad farewel for ever to plays and diverſions, dancing, unprofitable walks and parties of pleaſure. For two years I had left off dreſſing my hair, it became me, and my huſband approved it. My only pleaſure now was to ſteal ſome moments to be alone with thee, oh thou, who art my only Love! All other pleaſure was a pain to me. I loſt not thy preſence, which was

was given me by a continual infuſion, not as I had imagined, by the efforts of the head, or force of thought in meditating on GOD, but in the bottom of the will, where I taſted with unutterable ſweetneſs the enjoyment of the beloved object, yet not as I came to do afterwards, by an eſſential union, but by a *real union in the will*, which brought me to diſcern, in a happy experience, that the ſoul was created to enjoy its GOD.

AS this union is the moſt perfect of all thoſe which are operated in the powers, its effect is alſo much greater; for tho' the union of the other powers enlightens the underſtanding, and abſorbs the memory; yet, if they are not accompanied with that of the will, they are of little uſe as they produce only tranſient effects. 'Tis the union of the will ſubjects the ſoul to GOD, conforms it to all his pleaſure, cauſes ſelf-will gradually to die, and laſtly drawing with it the other powers, by means of the charity with which it is filled, it cauſes them gradually to be reunited in the center, and loſt therein, as to their own nature and operations.

THIS loſs is called the *Annihilation of the powers*, for tho' in themſelves they ſtill ſubſiſt, yet they ſeem annihilated to us, in proportion as charity fills and inflames, it becomes ſo ſtrong, as by degrees to ſurmount all the activity of the will of man, ſubjecting it to that of GOD, in ſuch ſort that when the ſoul is docile, and leaves itſelf to be purified, and emptied of all that which it has of its own, oppoſite to the will of GOD, it finds itſelf by little and little, detached from every motion

tion of its own, and placed in a holy indifference, wiſhing nothing but what GOD does and wills. But this never can be effected by the activity of our own will, even tho' it were employed in continual acts of reſignation; becauſe theſe, tho' very virtuous, are ſo far one's own actions, and cauſe the will to ſubſiſt in a multiplicity, in a kind of ſeparate diſtinction or diſſimilitude from GOD.

WHEN the Will of the creature entirely ſubmits to that of the Creator, ſuffering freely and voluntarily—and yielding only a concurrence to the divine will (which is its abſolute ſubmiſſion—) ſuffering itſelf to be totally ſurmounted and deſtroyed, by the operations of Charity. This abſorbs the will into itſelf, conſummates it in that of GOD, and purifies it from all narrowneſs, diſſimilitude, and propriety or ſelfiſhneſs.

THE caſe is the ſame with the other two powers, whereinto, by means of charity, the two other theological virtues, Faith and Hope are introduced. Faith ſo ſtrongly ſeizes on the *underſtanding*, as to make it decline all reaſonings, all particular illuminations and illuſtrations, how ſublime ſoever; which ſufficiently demonſtrates how far viſions, revelations, extaſies, *&c.* differ from this, and hinder the ſoul from being loſt in GOD: For tho' by them it appears loſt in him for ſome tranſient moments, yet it is not a true loſs; ſince the ſoul which is entirely loſt in GOD finds itſelf again no more. Faith then makes the ſoul loſe every diſtinct light, in order to place it in its own pure light.

As

As we ſee that the ſun with his general light, entirely covers or drowns all the little diſtinct lights of the ſtars, which (in its abſence) glow, and are brightly diſcernible; yet don't give us a light whereby we may ſee things, as they are, in their proper forms and colours: So viſions and extaſies, however diſcernible by reaſon of their little extent, (being very narrow and partial) cannot confirm us in the truth; they are too liable to make us miſtake by their uncertain glimmering. It is the ſame caſe with all the inward openings which are not from true FAITH. This Faith is the gift of the holy ſpirit, which, as it ariſes, undeceives the ſoul from the miſconceptions occaſioned by the others, and obſcuring all the ſelf-pleaſing lights, puts it in the pure and ſacred light of truth, which, altho' much leſs gratifying, is a thouſand fold more ſecure than all others——and is properly the true light of this life, until that JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Light, riſes in the Soul, and enlightens it himſelf. He who enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, of the *new life* in GOD.—— This is elevated,—but I have yielded myſelf to be carried away by that ſpirit which has cauſed me to write.

THE memory too, finds all its little activities ſurmounted by degrees, and abſorbed in hope, and finally the powers are all concentered and loſt in pure Charity, which ingulphs them into itſelf by means of their ſovereign the WILL, for the Will is the ſovereign of the powers, as Charity is the Queen of the Virtues, and unites them all in herſelf.

——THIS

——THIS reunion which is thus made is called, the *central union* or *unity*—becauſe that by means of the Will and Charity, all are reunited in the center of the Soul in GOD, our ultimate end.—According to St. John,—*He who dwelleth in Charity, or Love, dwelleth in GOD, for God is Love.*

THIS union of my will to thine, oh my GOD, and this ineffable preſence was ſo ſweet and powerful, that I was compelled to yield to its delightful power,—which was ſtrict and ſevere to my minuteſt faults.—

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

MY Senſes (as I have deſcribed) were continually mortified, and under perpetual reſtraint. For it ſhould be well noted, that to conquer them totally, it is neceſſary to deny them the ſmalleſt relaxation, until the victory is compleated. We ſee thoſe who content themſelves in practiſing great outward auſterities, and yet by indulging their ſenſes in what is called innocent and neceſſary, they remain for ever unſubdued; ſo that auſterities, however ſevere, will not conquer the ſenſes. To deſtroy their power, the moſt effectual means is, in general, to deny them firmly what will pleaſe, to give them every thing that diſguſts; and to perſevere in this, until they are reduced to be without appetite or repugnance. But if we attempt, during the warfare, to grant them any relaxation, we act like thoſe, who, under pretext of ſtrengthening a man, who was condemned to be ſtarved to death, ſhould give him from time to time, a little nouriſhment, which indeed would prolong his torments, and poſtpone his death.

IT is juſt the ſame with the death of the ſenſes, the powers, the underſtanding, and ſelf will; for if we do not eradicate every remains of ſelf ſubſiſting in theſe, we ſupport them in a dying life to the end. This ſtate and its termination, are clearly ſet forth by St. Paul. He ſpeaks of *bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jeſus.* (2 Cor. iv. 10.) but, leſt we ſhould reſt here, he fully diſtinguiſhes this, from the ſtate of

of *being dead, and having our life hid with Chriſt in God.*—It is only by a total death to ſelf we can be loſt in GOD.

HE who is thus dead has no farther need of mortification; for the very end of mortification is accompliſhed in him, and all is become new. It is an unhappy error in thoſe good ſouls, who have arrived at a conqueſt of the bodily ſenſes, thro' this unremitted and continual mortification, that they ſhould ſtill continue attached to the exerciſe of it; they ſhould rather drop their attention thereto, and remain in indifference, accepting with equality, the good as the bad, the ſweet as the bitter, and bend their whole attention to a labour of greater importaace; namely, the mortification of the *mind* and *ſelf-will*, beginning by dropping all the activity of ſelf, which can never be done without the moſt profound prayer; no more than the death of the ſenſes can be perfected, without profound recollection joined to mortification; and indeed recollection is the chief means, whereby we attain to a conqueſt of the ſenſes, as it detaches and ſeparates us from them, and ſweetly ſaps the very cauſe from whence they derive their influence over us.

THE more thou didſt augment my love, and my patience, O my Lord, the leſs reſpite had I from the moſt oppreſſive croſſes: But love rendered them eaſy to bear.——O ye poor ſouls, who exhauſt yourſelves with needleſs vexation, if you would but ſeek GOD in your hearts, there would be a ſpeedy period to all your troubles; for the encreaſe of croſſes would proportionably encreaſe your delight.

LOVE

LOVE, at the beginning, athirſt for mortification impelled me to ſeek and invent various kinds, and it is ſurprizing, that as ſoon as the bitterneſs of any new mode of mortification was exhauſted, another kind was pointed to me, and I was inwardly led to purſue it. Divine Love ſo enlightened my heart, and ſo ſcrutinized into its ſecret ſprings, that the ſmalleſt defects became expoſed. If I was about to ſpeak, ſomething wrong was inſtantly pointed to me, and I was compelled to ſilence: if I kept ſilence, faults herein were preſently diſcovered,—in every action there was ſomething defective, in my mortifications, my penances, my alms-givings, my retirement, I was faulty. When I walked, I obſerved there was ſomething wrong; if I ſpoke any way in my own favour, I ſaw pride.—If I ſaid within myſelf, alas, I will ſpeak no more, here was *ſelf*. If I was chearful and open I was condemned;—this pure Love found always matter for reproof in me, and was jealous that nothing ſhould eſcape unnoticed. It was not that I was particularly attentive over myſelf, for it was even with conſtraint I could look at all at myſelf; as my attention towards GOD, by an attachment of my will to his, was without intermiſſion, I waited continually upon him, and he watched inceſſantly over me, and he led me by his providence, that I forgot all things; I knew not how to communicate what I felt to any one. I was ſo loſt to myſelf that I could ſcarcely go about ſelf-examination; when I attempted it all ideas of myſelf immediately diſappeared, and I found myſelf occupied with my ONE OBJECT, without diſtinction of ideas; I was abſorbed in peace inexpreſſible; I ſaw by the eye of faith that it was GOD that thus wholly

poſſeſſed me; but I did not reaſon at all about it.

It muſt not however be ſuppposed, that Divine Love ſuffered my faults to go unpuniſhed. O God! with what rigour doſt thou puniſh the moſt faithful, the moſt loving and beloved of thy children. I mean not externally, for this would be inadequate to the ſmalleſt fault, in a ſoul that God is about to purify radically; and the puniſhments it can inflict on itſelf, are rather gratifications and refreſhments than otherwiſe. Indeed the manner in which he corrects his choſen, muſt be felt, or it is impoſſible to conceive how dreadful it is; and in my attempt to explain it, I ſhall be unintelligible, except to experienced ſouls. It is an internal burning, a ſecret fire, ſent from God to purge away the fault, giving extreme pain, until this purification is effected. It is like a diſlocated joint, which is in inceſſant torment, until the bone is replaced. This pain is ſo ſevere, that the ſoul would do any thing to ſatisfy God for the fault, and would rather be torn in pieces than endure the torment. Sometimes ſhe flies to others, and opens her ſtate that ſhe may find conſolation, but thereby ſhe fruſtrates God's deſigns towards her. It is of the utmoſt conſequence to know what uſe to make of this diſtreſs, as the whole of one's ſpiritual advancement depends thereon. We ſhould at theſe ſeaſons of internal anguiſh, obſcurity and mourning, co-operate with God, and endure this conſuming torture in its utmoſt extent (whilſt it continues) without attempting to leſſen or encreaſe it; but bear it paſſively, nor ſeek to ſatisfy God by any thing we can do of ourſelves. To continue

nue paſſive at ſuch a time is extremely difficult, and requires great firmneſs and courage: I knew ſome, who being defective herein, never advanced farther in the ſpiritual proceſs, becauſe they grew impatient under the pain, and quickly ſought ſome means of conſolation. But my Lord taught me to ſeek no redreſs, until he had, as it were, fully avenged himſelf. Oh how lovely, how rigidly juſt and pityleſs, yet how ſweet are his dealings to his Beloved! I have endured this torment, not only many hours, bat days, in proportion to the nature of my fault; a haſty word, an unguarded look, was puniſhed with ſeverity; and I ſaw clearly, that had I attempted to put my own hand to the work, under pretence of ſupporting the ark, I ſhould have been puniſhed like *Oza*. Indeed it was inexpreſſibly difficult, to lie paſſive under theſe crucifying operations of the divine ſpirit.

CHAP XII.

THE treatment of my Huſband and Mother-in-law, however rigourous and inſulting, I now bore ſilently—and made them no replies, and this was not ſo difficult for me; becauſe the greatneſs of my interior occupation, and what paſſed within, rendered me inſenſible to all the reſt; yet there were times when I was left to myſelf: And then I could not refrain from tears, when they fell violently on me. I did the loweſt offices for them, to humble myſelf; preventing ſuch as had been uſed to do them: Yet all this did not win their favour. When they were in a rage, tho' I could not find that I had given them any occaſion for it; yet I did not fail to beg their pardon, and even from the girl I have ſpoken of. I had a good deal of pain to ſurmount myſelf, as to the laſt; becauſe ſhe became the more inſolent for it; reproaching me with things which ought to have made her bluſh, and to have covered her with ſhame. As ſhe ſaw that I contradicted and reſiſted her no more in any thing, ſhe proceeded to treat me ſtill worſe: And when I aſked her pardon, for the very offences which ſhe had given me, ſhe triumphed, ſaying, "I knew "very well I was in the right." Her arrogance roſe to that height, that I would not have treated the meaneſt ſervant, or vaſſal, as ſhe treated me.

ONE day, as ſhe was dreſſing me, ſhe pulled me very roughly, and ſpoke to me very inſolently. I ſaid to her, "It is not on my account that I "am willing to anſwer you, for what you do "gives me no pain, bnt leſt you ſhould act thus "before

"before perſons to whom it would give offence: "Moreover, as I am your Miſtreſs, GOD is af-"ſuredly offended therewith." She left me that moment, and ran like a mad woman to meet my huſband, telling him, "ſhe would ſtay no lon-"ger, I treated her ſo ill, and that I hated her "for the care ſhe took of him in his indiſpoſiti-"ons, which were continual, wanting her not to "do any ſervice for him." As my huſband was very haſty, he took fire at theſe words. I finiſhed the dreſſing of myſelf alone, ſince ſhe had left me, and durſt not call another girl; for ſhe would not ſuffer another girl to come near me. All on a ſudden, I ſaw my huſband coming like a Lion, for he never was in ſuch a tranſport as this. I thought he was going to ſtrike me; I expected the blow with tranquillity; he threatened me with his lifted crutch; I thought he was going to knock me down with it; and holding myſelf cloſely united to GOD, I beheld it without pain. However he did not ſtrike me, for he hadpreſence of mind enough to ſee what an indignity it would be; but in his rage he threw it at me. It fell near me, but did not touch me; after which he diſcharged himſelf in ſuch language, as if I had been a ſtreet beggar, or the moſt infamous of all creatures. I kept a profound ſilence, being recollected in GOD, to ſuffer for his love all theſe things. The girl in the mean time comes in. At the ſight of her his rage redoubles. I kept near to GOD, as a victim diſpoſed to ſuffer whatever he would permit; when my huſband ordered me to beg her pardon, which I readily did, and thereby appeaſed him. I went preſently into my dear cloſet, where I no ſooner was, than my divine Director impelled me to make this girl a preſent, to recompenſe her for the croſs which ſhe had

cauſed me, which I did. She was a little aſtoniſhed, but her heart was too hard to be gained.

I OFTEN acted thus, for ſhe very frequently gave me ſuch opportunities. She had a ſingular dexterity in attending the ſick, and my huſband was ſo almoſt continually: from hence none but her would be ſuffered to touch him. For this reaſon he had a very great regard for her. Moreover, ſhe was ſo artful that before him ſhe affected an extraordinary reſpect for me; but when he was not preſent, if I ſaid a word to her, though with the greateſt mildneſs; if ſhe heard him coming, ſhe cried out with all her might, that ſhe was unhappy; and acted the diſtreſſed in ſuch a manner, that, without informing himſelf of the truth, he was irritated againſt me, and my mother-in-law too.

THE violence I did to my proud and haſty nature was ſo great, that I could hold out no longer. I was quite ſpent with it. It ſeemed ſometimes as if I were inwardly rent, and I have often fallen ſick with the ſtruggle. She did not forbear exclaiming againſt me, even before perſons of diſtinction, who came to ſee me. If I was ſilent, ſhe took offence at that yet more, and ſaid, "I "deſpiſed her." She cry'd me down, and made complaints of me to every body: But all this redounded to my honour and her own diſgrace; My reputation was ſo well eſtabliſhed, on account of my exterior modeſty, my devotion, and the great acts of charity which I did, that nothing could ſhake it.

SOMETIMES ſhe ran out into the very ſtreet, crying out againſt me. One time ſhe exclaimed, "Am

"Am not I very unhappy to have ſuch a miſtreſs?" People gathered about her to know what I had done to her; and not knowing what to ſay, ſhe anſwered, "I had not ſpoken to her all the "day." They returned, laughing, and ſaid, "She has done you no great harm then."

I am ſurprized at the blindneſs of confeſſors, and at their permitting their penitents to conceal ſo much of the truth from them.—for the confeſſor of this girl made her paſs for a ſaint. This he ſaid in my hearing. I anſwered nothing; for Love would not admit me ſpeaking of my troubles; but that I ſhould conſecrate them all to him by a profound ſilence.

MY huſband was out of humour with my devotion, it became inſupportable to him, "what ſays he, you love GOD ſo much, that you love me no longer;" ſo little did he comprehend that the true conjugal love is that which GOD himſelf forms in the heart that loves him. Oh, thou who art pure and holy, thou imprinted in me from the firſt ſuch a love of chaſtity, that there was nothing in the world which I would not have undergone to poſſeſs and preſerve it. I endeavoured not to be diſagreeable to my huſband in any thing, and to pleaſe him in every thing he could require of me. GOD gave me ſuch a purity of ſoul at that time, that I had not ſo much as a bad thought. Sometimes my huſband ſaid to me, "One ſees plainly that you never loſe "the preſence of GOD."

THE world, ſeeing I quitted it, perſecuted and turned me into ridicule. I was its entertainment, and the ſubject of its fables. It could not bear

that a woman, who was ſcarce twenty years of age, ſhould thus make war againſt it, and overcome. My mother-in-law took part with the world, and blamed me for not doing many things, that in her heart ſhe would have been highly offended had I done them. I was as one loſt, and all alone: So little commerce had I with the creatures, farther than neceſſity required. I ſeemed to experience literally thoſe words of St. PAUL, "I live, yet, "no more I, but CHRIST liveth in me;" for he was become the ſoul of my ſoul, and the life of my life. His operations were ſo powerful, ſo ſweet, and ſo ſecret, all together, that I could not expreſs them. We went into the country about ſome buſineſs. Oh! What unutterable communications did I there experience in retirement!

I WAS inſatiable for prayer, I aroſe at four o' clock in the morning to pray. I went very far to the church, which was ſo ſituated that the coach could not come to it. There was a ſteep hill to go down and another to aſcend. All that coſt me nothing: I had ſuch a longing deſire to meet with GOD, as my only good, who on his part was graciouſly forward to give himſelf to his poor creature, and for it to do even viſible miracles. Such as ſaw me lead a life ſo very different from the women of the world, ſaid I was a fool. They attributed it to ſtupidity. Sometimes they ſaid, "What can all this "mean? Some people think this lady has "parts, but nothing of them appears." For if I went into company, often I could not ſpeak; ſo much was I engaged within, ſo inward with the Lord, as not to attend to any thing elſe: If any near me ſpoke, I heard nothing

thing of what they ſaid. I generally took one with me, that this might not appear. I took ſome work, to hide under that appearance, the real employ of my heart. When I was alone, the work dropped out of my hands: and I could do nothing elſe but reſign myſelf to be wholly taken up with love. I wanted to perſuade a relation of my huſband's to practiſe prayer. She thought me a fool, for depriving myſelf of all the amuſements of the age: But the Lord has ſince opened her eyes, to make her deſpiſe them. I could have wiſhed to teach all the world to love GOD; and thought it depended only on them to feel what I felt. GOD made uſe of my thinking thus, to gain many ſouls to himſelf.

THE good father I have ſpoken of, who was the inſtrument of my converſion, brought me acquainted with GENEVIEVE GRANGER, prioreſs of the Benedictines, one of the greateſt ſervants of GOD of her time. She proved of very great ſervice to me, as in the ſequel will appear. My confeſſor, who had told every one that I was a ſaint before, when ſo full of miſeries, and ſo far from the condition to which GOD in his mercy had now brought me, ſeeing I placed a confidence in the Father of whom I have ſpoken, and that I ſteered in a road which was unknown to him, declared openly againſt me: And the monks of his order perſecuted me much. They even preached publickly againſt me, as a perſon under a deluſion.

MY huſband and mother-in-law, who till now had been indifferent about this confeſſor, then joined him and ordered me to leave off prayer, and

and the exercise of piety; but that I could not do. Even when I was in company, GOD seized my heart more powerfully. There was carried on a conversation within me, very different from that which passed without. I did what I could to hinder it from appearing, but could not. The presence of so great a Master manifested itself, even on my countenance: And that pained my husband, as he sometimes told me. I did what I could to hinder it from being noticed, but was not able completely to hide it. I was so much inwardly occupied that I knew not what I eat. I made as if I eat some kinds of meat, though I did not take any, and acted so dexterously that they did not perceive it. This deep inward attention suffered me scarcely to see or hear any thing.—I still continued to use many severe mortifications and austerities.—Yet they did not in the least diminish the freshness of my countenance.

I HAD often grievous fits of sickness and no consolation in life, but in the practice of prayer, and in seeing Mother GRANGER. How dear did these cost me, especially the former! But what do I say: Oh my Love.—Is this esteeming the cross as I ought, should I not rather say that prayer to me was recompensed *with the cross*, and the cross *with prayer*. Oh ye inseparable gifts, united in my heart and life! When your eternal light arose in my soul, how perfectly it reconciled me, and made ye the object of my love! from the moment I received thee I have never been free from the cross, nor it seems without prayer—tho' for a long time I thought myself deprived thereof which exceedingly augmented my afflictions.

MY

MY confessor at first exerted his efforts to hinder me from practising prayer, and from seeing Mother GRANGER. And, he violently stirred up my husband and mother-in-law to hinder me from praying: The method they took to effect it was, to watch me from morning till night. I durst durst not go out from my mother-in-law's chamber, or from my husband's bed-side. Sometimes I carried my work to the window, under a pretence of seeing better, in order to relieve myself with some moments repose; but they came to watch me very closely, to see if I did not pray instead of working. When my husband and mother-in-law played at cards, if I did but turn towards the fire, they watched to see if I continued my work or shut my eyes; if they observed I closed them, they would be in a fury against me for several hours: But what is most strange, when my husband went abroad, having some days of health, he would not allow me to pray in his absence. He marked my work, and sometimes, after he was just gone out, returning immediately, if he found me in my closet, he would be in a rage. In vain I said to him, "Surely, Sir, what "matters it what I do when you are absent, if "I be assiduous in attending you when you are "present?" That would not satisfy him; he insisted upon it that I should no more pray in his absence than his presence.

I BELIEVE there is hardly a torment equal to that of being ardently drawn to retirement, and not having it in one's power to be retired: But, oh my GOD, the war they raised, to hinder me from loving thee, did but augment my love; and while they were striving to prevent my addresses to thee,

thee, thou dreweſt me into an inexpreſſible ſilence; and the more they laboured to ſeparate me from thee, the more cloſely didſt thou unite me to thyſelf: The flame of thy love was kindled, and kept up, by every thing that was done to extinguiſh it.

OFTEN thro' compliance I played at piquet with my huſband, and at ſuch times was even more interiorly attracted than if I had been at church. I was ſcarce able to contain the fire which burned in my ſoul, which had all the fervor of what men call love, but nothing of its impetuoſity; for the more ardent, the more peaceable it was. This fire gained ſtrength from every thing that was done to ſuppreſs it: And the ſpirit of prayer was nouriſhed and increaſed, from their contrivances and endeavours, to diſallow me any time for practiſing it. I loved, without conſidering of a motive, or reaſon for loving; for nothing paſſed in my head, but much in the innermoſt of my ſoul. I thought not about any recompence, gift, or favour, which he could beſtow or I receive. The Well-beloved was himſelf the only object, which attracted my heart. I could not contemplate his attributes. I knew nothing elſe, but to *love* and to *ſuffer*. Oh, ignorance more truly learned than any ſcience of the Doctors, ſince it taught me ſo well JESUS CHRIST crucified, and brought me to be in love with his holy Croſs. I could then have wiſhed to die, in order to be inſeparably united, to him who ſo powerfully attracted my heart. As all this paſſed in the will, the imagination and the underſtanding being abſorbed in it, in an union of enjoyment, I knew not what to ſay, having never read or heard of ſuch a ſtate as I experienced; I dreaded

dreaded deluſion and feard all was not right, for before this I had known nothing of the operations of GOD in ſouls. I had only read St. *Francis* de *Sales*, *Thomas* a *Kempis*, the *Spiritual Combat*, and the holy Scriptures; I was quite a ſtranger to thoſe interior and ſpiritual books wherein ſuch ſtates are deſcribed.

THEN all thoſe amuſements and pleaſures that are ſo prized and eſteemed, appeared to me dull and inſipid, ſo that I wondered how it could be that I had ever enjoyed them.—And indeed ſince that time, I could never find any ſatisfaction or enjoyment out of GOD, altho I have ſometimes been unfaithfull enough to endeavour it.—I was not aſtoniſhed that Martyrs gave their lives for JESUS CHRIST. I thought them happy, and ſighed after their priviledge of ſuffering for him—for I ſo eſteemed the croſs that my greateſt trouble was, the want of ſuffering as much as my heart thirſted for.

THIS reſpect and eſteem for the croſs continually increaſed, and altho afterwards, I loſt the ſenſible reliſh and enjoyment thereof, yet the love and eſteem has never quited me no more than the croſs itſelf.—Indeed it has ever been my faithful companion, changing and augmenting, in proportion to the changes and diſpoſition of my inward ſtate. Oh bleſſed Croſs, thou haſt never quitted me, ſince I ſurrendered myſelf to my divine *crucified* maſter, and I ſtill hope that thou wilt never abandon me.—So eager was I for the croſs, that I endeavoured to make myſelf feel the utmoſt rigour of every mortification—and felt them to the quick: Yet this only ſerved to awaken

awaken my desire of suffering, and to shew me that it is GOD alone, that can prepare and send crosses suitable to a soul that thirsts for a *following of his sufferings, and a conformity of his death.* The more my state of prayer augmented, my desire of suffering grew stronger, and the full weight of heavy crosses from every side came thundring upon me.

The peculiar property of this prayer of the hear is to give a strong faith. Mine was without limits, as was also my resignation to GOD, and my confidence in him, my love of his will, and of the orders of his providence over me. I was very timorous before, but now feared nothing. It is in such a case that one feells the efficacy of these words of the gospel, *My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Matt. xi. 30.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

I HAD a secret desire given me from that time to be wholly devoted to the disposal of my GOD, let that be what it would. I said, "What "couldst thou demand of me, that I would not "willingly sacrifice or offer thee? Oh, spare "me not." The cross and humiliations were represented to my mind, in the most frighful colours—but this deterred me not; I yeilded myself up as a willing victim, and indeed our Lord seemed to accept of my sacrifice, for his divine providence furnished me incessantly with occasions and opportunities for putting it to the test.

I could scarce hear spake of GOD, or our LORD JESUS CHRIST, without being almost transported out of myself. What surprized me the most was, the great difficulty I had to say the vocal prayers I had been used to repeat. As soon as I opened my lips to pronounce them, the love of GOD seized me so strongly, that I was swallowed up in a profound silence, and an inexpressible peace. I made fresh attempts but still in vain. I began, again and again but could not go on. And as I had never before heard of such a state, I knew not what to do. My inability still increased, because my love to GOD was still growing more strong, more violent and more overpowering. There was made in me, without the sound of words, a continual prayer, which seemed to me to be the prayer of our LORD JESUS CHRIST himself; a prayer of the Word, which is made by the Spirit, that according to St. PAUL, *asketh for us that which is good, perfect,* and

and conformable to the Will of God. Rom. viii. 26. 27.

My domeſtick croſſes continued—I was deprived of ſeeing or even writing to Mrs. Granger, my very going to divine ſervice or the bleſſed ſacrament, were a ſource of woeful offences, and the only amuſement I had left me, was the viſiting and attending the poor ſick and ſore, and performing the loweſt offices for them.

But now my prayer-time began to be exceeding diſtreſsful, I compelled myſelf to continue at it, tho' deprived of all comfort and conſolation, and yet when I was not employed therein, I felt an ardent deſire and longing for it.—I ſuffered inexpreſſible anguiſh in my mind, and endeavoured with the ſevereſt inflictions of corporal auſterities to mitigate and divert it—but in vain, the dryneſs and barreneſs ſtill increaſed, I found no more that enlivning vigour which had hitherto carried me on in the paths of virtue with great ſwiftneſs. My paſſions (which were not yet thoroughly mortified) revived, and cauſed me new conflicts. I ſeemed to myſelf to be like thoſe young brides, who find a great deal of difficulty to lay aſide their *ſelf-love*, and follow their huſbands to the war. I relapſed into a vain complacency and fondneſs for myſelf. My propenſity to pride and vanity, which ſeemed quite dead, while I was ſo filled with the love of God, now ſhewed itſelf again, and gave me ſevere exerciſe; which made me lament the exterior beauty of my perſon, and pray to God inceſſantly, that he would remove from me that obſtacle, and make me ugly. I could even have wiſhed to be deaf, blind and dumb, that nothing might divert me from my love of God.

I set

I set out on a journey, which we had then to make, and here I appeared more than ever like thoſe lamps, which emit a new glimmering flaſh, when they are juſt on the point of extinguiſhing. Alas! how many ſnares were laid in my way? I met them at every ſtep. I even committed infidelities thro' unwatchfulneſs. But, oh my God, with what rigour didſt thou puniſh them! a uſeleſs glance was checked as a ſin. How many tears did thoſe inadvertant faults coſt me which I fell into, through a weak compliance, and even againſt my will! Thou knoweſt, oh my Love, that thy rigour, exerciſed after my ſlips, was not the motive of thoſe tears which I ſhed. With what pleaſure would I have ſuffered the moſt rigorous ſeverity to have been cured of my infidelity; and to what ſevere chaſtiſement did I not condemn myſelf! Sometimes thou treated me like a father who pities the child, and careſſes it after its involuntary faults. How often didſt thou make me ſenſible of thy love towards me, notwithſtanding my blemiſhes. It was the ſweetneſs of this love after my falls which cauſed my greateſt pain; for the more the amiableneſs of thy love was extended to me, the more inconſolable I was for having departed ever ſo little from thee. When I had let ſome inadvertance eſcape me, I found thee ready to receive me: And I have often cryed out, "Oh my God! "is it poſſible that thou canſt be ſo gracious to "ſuch an offender, and ſo indulgent to my "faults; ſo propitious to one who has wandered "aſtray from thee, by vain compliances, and "an unworthy fondneſs for frivolous objects? "And yet no ſooner do I return, than I find "thee waiting, with open arms ready to receive "me after all."

O SINNER, ſinner! Haſt thou any reaſon to complain of GOD? Ah, if there yet remains any juſtice in thee, confeſs the truth, and own that it is owing to thyſelf that thou goeſt wrong; that in departing from him thou diſobeyeſt his call; and that, after all this, when thou returneſt, he is ready to receive thee; and if thou returneſt not, he makes uſe of the moſt engaging and prevalent motives to win thee thereto: Yet thou turneſt a deaf ear to his voice; thou wilt not hear him. Thou ſayeſt he ſpeaks not to thee, though he calls loudly. It is therefore only becauſe thou daily rebelleſt, and art growing daily more and more deaf to *the voice of the charmer*. Oh my love, I am ſure thou didſt never ceaſe to ſpeak to my heart, and waſt always ready to ſuccour me in the time of neceſſity.

WHEN I was at *Paris*, and the Clergy ſaw me ſo young, they appeared aſtoniſhed. Thoſe to whom I opened my ſtate told me, "that I could "never enough thank GOD for the graces confer-"red on me; that if I knew them I ſhould be "amazed at them; and that if I were not faith-"ful, I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful of all crea-"tures." Some declared that they never knew any woman whom GOD held ſo cloſely, and in ſo great a purity of conſcience. I believe what rendered it ſo was the continual care thou hadſt over me, oh my GOD, making me feel thy intimate preſence, even as thou haſt promiſed it to us in thy goſpel. "*If a man love me, we will come* "*unto him, and make our abode with him.*" John xiv. 23. The continual experience of thy preſence in me was what preſerved me. I became deeply aſſured of what the prophet hath ſaid, *Except the* LORD *keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* Pſa. cxxvii. 1. Thou, oh my Love, waſt my faithful keeper, who didſt continually defend my heart againſt all ſorts of enemies, preventing the leaſt faults, or correcting them when vivacity had occaſioned their being committed. But alas! my dear Love, when thou ceaſed to watch for me, or left me to myſelf, how weak was I, and how eaſily did my enemies prevail over me! Let others aſcribe their victories to their own fidelity. As for me, I ſhall never attribute them to any thing elſe than thy paternal care over me. I have too often experienced, to my coſt, what I ſhould be without thee, to preſume in the leaſt on any cares of my own. It is to thee, and to thee only, that I owe every thing, oh my deliverer; and my being indebted to thee for it gives me infinite joy.

WHILE I was at *Paris*, I relaxed in my uſual exerciſes, on account of the little time I had, and the dryneſs and diſtreſs which had ſeized my heart, the hand which ſuſtained me being hid, and my beloved withdrawn. I did many things which I ſhould not; for I knew the extreme fondneſs which ſome had for me, and ſuffered them to expreſs it without checking it as I ought. I fell into other faults too, as having my neck a little too bare, though not near ſo much as others had. I wept bitterly becauſe I plainly ſaw I was too remiſs; and that was my torment. I ſought all about for him who had ſecretly inflamed my heart. I enquired for tidings of him. But alas! hardly any body knew him. I cryed, "Oh thou "beſt beloved of my ſoul! hadſt thou been near "me theſe diſaſters had not befallen me. *Tell* "*me where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock* "*to reſt at noon*, in the bright day of eternity,

" which is not, like the day of time, ſubject to " night and eclipſes?" When I ſay, that I ſpoke thus to him it is but to explain myſelf. In reality it all paſſed almoſt in ſilence, for I could not ſpeak. My heart had a language which was carried on without the ſound of words, underſtood of its well-beloved, as he underſtands the language of the WORD ever eloquent, which ſpeaks inceſſently in the innermoſt of the ſoul. Oh ſacred language! which experience only gives the comprehenſion of! Let not any think it a barren language, an effect of the meer imagination. Far different, it is the ſilent expreſſion of the Word in the ſoul. As he never ceaſes to ſpeak, ſo he never ceaſes to operate. *Dixit & facta ſunt.* He effects in the ſoul what he ſpeaks in it. This is a ſubſtantial expreſſive word, which operates infinitely more than all that one can conceive: It continues for ever fixed and unchangeable, a word which is comprehended of him, in whom it is ſpoken, only by its effects. This ineffable word communicates to the ſoul, in which it reſides, a facility of ſpeaking without words; the language of the bleſſed in heaven; well underſtood among congenial ſpirits, even without the medium of words diffuſing among them the union of grace, peace, and ſweetneſs; and productive of ſuch benefits as nothing but experience can declare. Oh if ſouls were pure enough, they would thus participate before hand the language of heaven.

BUT this no creature can procure of itſelf; for its ſilence, being only from its own efforts, would not have the effect of the grace which I am ſpeaking of, not having the ſame principle. If

If people once came to know the operations of GOD, in ſouls wholly reſigned to his guiding, it would fill them with reverential admiration and awe.

To return to my ſubject, from which I have departed, to follow the impetuoſity of the ſpirit which makes me write, which will be likely to happen to me ſometimes; (wherefore, ſir, I beg you to excuſe the irregularity of this hiſtory which you have required of me, not being in a condition to write otherwiſe.)

As I ſaw that the purity of my ſtate was like to be ſullied by too great a commerce with the creatures, I made haſte to finiſh what detained me at *Paris*, in order to return to the country. 'Tis true, Oh my GOD, I felt that thou hadſt given me ſtrength enough to avoid the Occaſions of Evil—but when I had ſo far yeilded as to get into them, I found I could not reſiſt the vain complaiſances, and a number of other foibles which they enſnared me into. The pain which I felt after my faults was inexpreſſible, it was not an anguiſh that aroſe from any diſtinct idea or conception, from any particular motive or affection —but a kind of devouring fire, which ceaſed not, till the fault was conſumed and the ſoul purified by it.—It was a baniſhment of my ſoul from the preſence of its beloved, its bridegroom. I could have no acceſs to him, neither could I have any reſt out of him, I knew not what to do. I was like the dove out of the ark, which finding no reſt for the ſole of her foot, was conſtrained to return to the ark; but, finding the window ſhut, could only fly about and about it. In the mean time, through an infidelity which will for ever render

render me culpable, I ſtrove to find ſome ſatiſfactions without, but could not. This eſſay ſerved to convince me of my folly, and of the vanity of thoſe pleaſures which are called innocent. When I was prevailed on to taſte them, I felt a ſtrong repulſe, which, joined with my remorſe for the tranſgreſſion, changed the diverſion into torment. "Oh my GOD! ſaid I, this is not "thee; and nothing elſe, beſide thee, can give "ſolid pleaſure."

ONE day, as much thro' unfaithfulneſs as complaiſance, I went to take a turn at ſome of the publick walks, rather from exceſs of vanity to ſhew myſelf there, than to take the pleaſure of the place. Oh my GOD! How didſt thou make me ſenſible of this fault? But far from puniſhing me in letting me partake of the amuſement, thou didſt it in holding me ſo cloſe to thyſelf, that I could give no attention to any thing but my fault and thy diſpleaſure. After this I was invited with ſome other Ladies to an entertainment at St. *Cloud*, thro' vanity and weak compliance, I yeilded and went. The regale was very magnificent; they, though wiſe in the eye of the world, could reliſh it; but as to me it was filled with bitterneſs. I could eat nothing, I could enjoy nothing, my diſquiet appeared on my countenance. Oh, what tears did it coſt me! For above three months my Beloved withdrew his favouring preſence, and I could ſee nothing but an angry GOD for me.

I WAS on this occaſion, and in another journey which I took with my huſband into *Touraine*, before I fell into the ſmall-pox, like thoſe animals deſtined for ſlaughter, which on certain days they

they adorn with greens and flowers, and bring in pomp into the city, before they kill them; this weak beauty, on the eve of its decline, ſhone forth in new brightneſs, in order to become the ſooner extinct.

ONE day as I walked to church, followed by a footman—in croſſing a bridge I was met by a poor man; I went to give him alms, he thanked me but refuſed them, and then ſpoke to me in a wonderful manner of GOD and divine things; he diſplayed to me my whole heart—my love to GOD, my Charity, my too great fondneſs for my beauty, and all my faults; he told me 'twas not enough to avoid hell, but that GOD required of me the utmoſt purity and height of perfection.——My heart aſſented to his reproofs—I heard him with ſilence and reſpect—his words penetrated my very ſoul, when I arrived at Church I fainted away; but have never ſeen the man ſince.

CHAP. XIV.

AFTER this, my husband enjoying some intermission of his almost continual ailments, had a mind to go to *Orleans*, and from thence into *Touraine*. In this journey my vanity made its last blaze. I received abundance of visits and applauses. But how clearly did I perceive the folly of men, who are so taken with vain beauty! I disliked the passion, yet not that in myself which caused it, tho' I sometimes ardently desired to be delivered from it. The continual combat of nature and grace cost me no small affliction. Nature was pleased with public applause; but grace made me dread it. What augmented the temptation was, that they esteemed in me virtue, joined with youth and beauty; not knowing that all the virtue was only in GOD, and his protection, and all the weakness in myself.

I WENT in search of confessors, to accuse myself of my failings, and to bewail my backslidings: But they were utterly insensible of my pain. They esteemed what GOD condemned. They treated as a virtue what to me appeared detestable in thy sight. Far from measuring my faults by thy graces, they only considered what I was, in comparison of what I might have been: Hence, instead of blaming me, they only flattered my pride, and justified me in what incurred thy rebuke; or only treated as a slight fault what in me was highly displeasing to thee, from whom I had received such signal mercies.

THE

THE heinousness of sins is not to be measured singly by their nature, but also by the state of the person who commits them; as the least unfaithfulness in a spouse is more injurious to her husband, than far greater ones in his domesticks. I told them all the trouble I had been under, for not having entirely covered my neck; tho' it was covered much more than by other women of my age. They assured me that I was very modestly dressed; and as my husband liked my dress, there could be nothing amiss in it. My inward director taught me quite the contrary; but I had not courage enough to follow him, and to dress myself differently from others, at my age. Beside, my vanity furnished me with pretences seemingly just, for following the mode. Oh, if Pastors knew what hurt they do in humouring female vanity, they would be more severe against it. Had I but found one honest enough to deal plainly with me, I should not have gone on thus; no, not for a moment. But my vanity, siding with the declared opinion of others, induced me to think them in the right, and my own scruples to be only mere fancy.

WE met with accidents in this journey, sufficient to have terrified any one, and tho' corrupt nature prevailed so far as I have just mentioned, yet my resignation to GOD was so strong, that I passed fearless, even where there was apparently no possibility of escape. At one time we got into a narrow pass, and did not perceive, until we were too far advanced to draw back, that the road was undermined by the river *Loire*, which ran beneath, and the banks had fallen in; so that in some places the

the footmen were obliged to ſupport one ſide of the carriage. All around me were terrified to the higheſt degree, yet GOD kept me perfectly tranquil, and I ſecretly rejoiced in the proſpect of loſing my life by a ſingular ſtroke of his providence. During this journey, I ſometimes was faulty in indulging my ſight with rare and curious objects.

ON my return, I went to ſee Mrs. GRANGER, to whom I related how it had been with me while abroad. She ſtrengthened and encouraged me to purſue my firſt deſign, and ſhe adviſed me to cover my neck entirely, which I have done ever ſince, notwithſtanding the ſingularity of it.

GOD who had ſo long deferred the chaſtiſement merited by ſuch a ſeries of infidelity, now began to puniſh me with double rigour for the abuſe of his grace. Sometimes I wiſhed to retire to a convent, and thought it lawful, as I judged it impoſſible to correſpond ſo fully with the divine operations, whilſt engaged in worldly matters. I found wherein I was weak, and that my faults were always of the ſame nature; it was therefore I ſought ſo ardently to ſhun the occaſion. I wiſhed to hide myſelf in ſome cave, or to be confined to a dreary priſon, rather than enjoy a liberty by which I ſuffered ſo much. Divine Love gently drew me inward, and vanity dragged me outward, and my heart was rent aſunder by the conteſt, as I neither gave myſelf wholly up to the one or the other.

I BESOUGHT my GOD to deprive me of power to diſpleaſe him, and cried,—Art thou not ſtrong enough

enough wholly to eradicate this unjuſt duplicity out of me!—For my vanity broke forth when occaſions offered; yet I quickly returned to GOD, and he inſtead of repulſing or upbraiding me, often received me with open arms, and gave me freſh teſtimonies of his love, which filled me with the moſt anguiſhing reflections on my offence; for tho' this wretched vanity was ſtill ſo prevalent, yet my love to GOD was ſuch, that after my wanderings, I would rather have choſen his rod than his careſſes. His intereſts, ſo to ſpeak, were more dear to me than my own, and I wiſhed he would have done himſelf juſtice upon me. My heart was full of grief and of love, and I was ſtung to the quick for offending him, who ſhowered his grace ſo profuſely upon me. That thoſe who know not GOD ſhould offend him by ſin is not to be wondered at, but that a heart which loved him more than itſelf, and ſo fully experienced his love, that this heart ſhould be ſeduced by propenſities which it deteſts, is a moſt cruel martyrdom, rendered inexpreſſibly afflicting by its long continuance.

WHEN I felt moſt ſtrongly thy preſence, and thy love, oh my GOD, ſaid I, how wonderfully thou beſtoweſt thy favours on ſuch a wretched creature, who requites thee only with ingratitude. For if any one reads this life with attention, he will ſee on GOD's part, nothing but goodneſs, mercy, and love; and on my part, nothing but weakneſs, ſin, and infidelity. If there be any thing that is good, it is thine, O my GOD! As for me I have nothing to glory in but my infirmities and my unworthineſs, ſince, in that everlaſting marriage-union thou haſt made with me, I brought with me nothing but weak-

weakneſs, ſin and miſery. Oh my Love! How I rejoice to owe all to thee, and that thou favoureſt my heart with a ſight of the treaſures and boundleſs riches of thy grace and love! Thou haſt dealt by me, as if a magnificent king ſhould marry a poor ſlave, forget her ſlavery, give her all the ornaments which may render her pleaſing in his eyes, and freely pardon her all the faults and ill qualities which her ignorance and bad education had given her. This thou haſt made my caſe. My poverty is become my riches, and in the extremity of my weakneſs I have found my ſtrength. Oh if any knew, with what confuſion the indulgent favours of GOD cover the ſoul after its faults!—'tis inconceivable! Such a ſoul would wiſh with all its power, to ſatisfy the divine juſtice.—I made verſes and little ſongs to bewail myſelf. I exerciſed auſterities, but they did not ſatisfy my heart. They were like thoſe drops of water which only ſerve to make the fire hotter. When I take a view of GOD and myſelf I am obliged to cry out, "Oh "admirable conduct of Love toward an ungrate-"ful wretch! Oh horrible ingratitude toward "ſuch unparallelled goodneſs!" A great part of my life is only a mixture of ſuch things as might be enough to ſink me to the grave betwixt grief and love!

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

ON my arrival at home, I found my huſband ſeized with the gout, and his other complaints; my little daughter ill, and like to die of the ſmall-pox; my eldeſt ſon too, took it, and had ſuch a vaſt quantity, and of ſo malignant a nature, that it rendered him as diſfigured, as before he had been beautiful. As ſoon as I perceived the ſmall-pox was in the houſe, I had no doubt but I ſhould take it. Mrs. GRANGER adviſed me timely to remove, if I could. My father offered to take me home, with my ſecond ſon, whom I tenderly loved. But my mother-in-law would not ſuffer it. She perſuaded my huſband it was uſeleſs, and ſent for a phyſician, who ſeconded her in it, ſaying, "I ſhould as readily take it at a diſtance "as here, if I were diſpoſed to take it." I may ſay, ſhe proved at that time a ſecond *Jephtha*, and that ſhe ſacrificed us both, tho' innocently. Had ſhe known what followed, I doubt not but ſhe would have acted otherwiſe. All the town ſtirred in this affair. Every one begged her to ſend me out of the houſe, and cried out that it was cruel to expoſe me thus. They ſet upon me too, imagining I was unwilling to go; for I had not told that ſhe was ſo averſe to it. I had at that time no other diſpoſition, than to ſacrifice myſelf to divine Providence; and though I might have removed, notwithſtanding my mother's reſiſtance, yet I would not without her conſent; becauſe it looked to me, as if her reſiſtance was an order of Heaven. Oh divine will of my GOD! Thou waſt

waſt then my only life, in the midſt of all my miſeries.

I continued in this ſpirit of ſacrifice to GOD, waiting from moment to moment in an entire reſignation, for whatever he ſhould be pleaſed to ordain. I cannot expreſs what nature ſuffered; for I was like one who ſees both certain death and an eaſy remedy, without being able to avoid the former, or try the latter. I had no leſs apprehenſion for my younger ſon than for myſelf: My mother-in-law ſo exceſſively doated on the eldeſt, that the reſt of us were indifferent to her: Yet I am aſſured, if ſhe had known that the younger would have died of the ſmall-pox, ſhe would not have acted as ſhe did. GOD makes uſe of creatures, and their natural inclinations, to accompliſh his deſigns. When I ſee in the creatures a conduct which appears unreaſonable and mortifying, I mount higher, and look upon them as inſtruments both of the juſtice and mercy of GOD; for his juſtice is full of mercy.

WHEN I told my huſband that my ſtomach was ſick, and that I was taking the ſmall-pox; he ſaid, it was only imagination. I let Mrs. GRANGER know the ſituation I was in. As ſhe had a tender heart, ſhe was affected by the treatment I met with, and encouraged me to offer myſelf up to the LORD. At length, nature finding there was no reſource, conſented to the ſacrifice which my ſpirit had already made. The diſorder gained ground apace, I was ſeized with a great ſhivering, and a pain both in my head and ſtomach. They would not yet believe that I was ſick, but in a few hours it went ſo far, that

that they thought my life in danger; for I was alſo taken with an inflammation on my lungs, and the remedies for the one diſorder were contrary to the other. My mother-in-law's favourite phyſician was not in town, nor the reſident ſurgeon. Another ſurgeon was ſent for, who ſaid, "I muſt be bled;" but my mother-in-law would not ſuffer it at that time to be done. So little attendance was paid me, that I was on the point of death for want of proper aſſiſtance. My huſband, not being able to ſee me, left me entirely to his mother. She would not allow any phyſician but her own to preſcribe for me, and yet did not ſend for him, though he was within a day's journey of us. In this extremity I opened not my mouth to requeſt any ſuccour. I looked for life or death from the hand of GOD, without teſtifying the leaſt uneaſineſs, at ſuch extraordinary conduct. The peace I enjoyed within, on account of that perfect reſignation, in which GOD kept me by his grace, was ſo great, that it made me forget myſelf, in the midſt of ſuch violent and oppreſſive diſorders.

BUT GOD's protection was indeed wonderful. How oft have I been reduced to extremity, yet he never failed to ſuccour, when things appeared moſt deſperate. It pleaſed him ſo to order it, that a ſkilful ſurgeon, who had attended me before, paſſing by our houſe, enquired after me. They told him I was extremely ill. He alighted immediately, and came in to ſee me. Never was man more ſurprized, when he ſaw the frightful condition I was in. The ſmall-pox, which could not come out, had fallen on my noſe with ſuch force, that it was quite

quite black. He thought there had been a gangrene in it, and that it was going to fall off. My eyes were like two coals; but I was no ways alarmed; for at that time, I could have made a ſacrifice of all things, and was pleaſed that GOD ſhould avenge himſelf, on that face, which had betrayed me into ſo many infidelities. He was ſo affrighted that he could not hide his ſurprize, and went into my mother-in-law's chamber, and told her, "it was "moſt ſhameful to let me die in that man-"ner, for want of bleeding." She ſtill oppoſed it ſo violently, that in ſhort ſhe told him flatly, "ſhe would not ſuffer it, until the phy-"ſician returned." He flew into ſuch a rage, at ſeeing me thus left without ſending for the phyſician, that he reproved my mother-in-law in the ſevereſt manner; but all in vain ſtill. Upon that he came up again preſently into my chamber, and ſaid, "If you chooſe, I will "bleed you, and ſave your life." I held out my arm to him; and, though it was extremely ſwelled, he bled me in an inſtant. My mother-in-law was in a violent paſſion about it. The ſmall-pox came out immediately; and he ordered that they ſhould get me bled again in the evening, but ſhe would not ſuffer it, and for fear of diſpleaſing my mother-in-law, and through a total reſignation of myſelf into the hands of GOD, I durſt not retain him, whatever occaſion I had for it.

I AM the more particular in this relation, to ſhew how advantageous it is to reſign one's ſelf to GOD without reſerve. Though in appearance he leaves us for a time, to prove and exerciſe our faith, yet he never fails us, when our need of

of him is the more preſſing: One may ſay with the Scripture, "It is GOD who bringeth down to "the gates of death, and raiſeth up again." The blackneſs and ſwelling of my noſe went off, and I believe, had they continued to bleed me, I had been pretty eaſy; but for want of that I grew worſe again. The malady fell into my eyes, and inflamed them with ſuch ſevere pain, that I thought I ſhould loſe them both.

I HAD thoſe violent pains for three weeks, during which I got very little ſleep. I could not ſhut my eyes, they were ſo full of the ſmall-pox, nor open them by reaſon of the pain I endured. There was the greateſt probability that I ſhould loſe my ſight, but I was wholly reconciled to the loſs; my throat, palate, and gums were likewiſe ſo filled with the pock, that I could not ſwallow broth, or take any nouriſhment, without ſuffering extremely. My whole body looked like that of a leper. All that ſaw me ſaid, they had never ſeen ſuch a ſhocking ſpectacle. But as to my ſoul, it was kept in a contentment not to be expreſſed. The hopes of its liberty, by the loſs of that beauty, which had ſo frequently brought me under bondage, rendered me ſo well ſatisfied, and ſo united to GOD, that I would not have changed my condition for that of the moſt happy Prince in the world.

EVERY one thought I would be inconſolable; and ſeveral expreſſed their ſympathy in my ſad condition, as they judged it; while I lay ſtill, in the ſecret fruition of a joy unſpeakable, in this total deprivation of what had been a ſnare to my pride, and to the paſſions of men. I praiſed

God in profound ſilence. None ever heard any complaints from me, either of my pains or the loſs I ſuſtained. All was well received as from God's hand. The only thing that I ſaid was, that I rejoiced at, and was exceeding thankful for the interior liberty I gained thereby; and they conſtrued this as a great crime. My confeſſor who had been diſſatisfied with me before, came to ſee me. He aſked me if I was not ſorry for having the ſmall-pox; and he now taxed me with pride for my anſwer.

My youngeſt little boy took the diſtemper the ſame day with myſelf, and died for want of care. This blow indeed ſtruck me to the heart, but yet, drawing ſtrength from my weakneſs, I offered him up, and ſaid to God as Job did, "Thou gaveſt him to me, and thou takeſt him "from me. Bleſſed be thy holy name." The ſpirit of ſacrifice poſſeſſed me ſo ſtrongly, that, though I loved this child tenderly, I never ſhed a tear at hearing of his death. The day he was buried, the doctor ſent to tell me he had not placed a tombſtone upon his grave, becauſe my little girl could not ſurvive him two days. My eldeſt ſon was not yet out of danger, ſo that I ſaw myſelf ſtriped of all my children at once, my huſband indiſpoſed, and myſelf extremely ſo. God did not take my little girl then. He prolonged her life ſome years, to make the loſs more painful to me.

At laſt my mother-in-law's phyſician arrived, at a time wherein he could be but of little ſervice to me. When he ſaw the ſtrange inflammation in my eyes he bled me ſeveral times; but it was too late. And thoſe bleedings which would have been

been ſo proper at firſt, did nothing but weaken me now. They could not even bleed me in the condition I was in, but with the greateſt difficulty; for my arms were ſo ſwelled, that the ſurgeon was obliged to puſh in the lance to a great depth. Moreover the bleeding being out of ſeaſon had like to have cauſed my death, this I confeſs would have been very agreeable to me. I looked upon death as the greateſt bleſſing for me. Yet I ſaw well I had nothing to hope on that ſide; and that, inſtead of meeting with ſo deſirable an event, I muſt prepare myſelf to ſupport the trials of life.

After my eldeſt ſon was grown better, he got up and came into my chamber. I was ſurprized at the extraordinary change I ſaw in him. His face, lately ſo fair and beautiful, was become like a courſe ſpot of earth, all full of furrows. That gave me the curioſity to view myſelf in a looking-glaſs. I felt myſelf ſhock'd, for I ſaw that God had ordered the ſacrifice in all its reality.

Some things now fell out by the contrariety of my Mother-in-law, that cauſed me ſevere croſſes, and put the finiſhing ſtroke to my ſon's face. However, my heart was firm in my God, and ſtrengthened itſelf by the number and greatneſs of my ſufferings.—I was as a victim inceſſantly offered upon the alter, to Him who firſt had ſacrificed himſelf for love.—*What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.* Theſe words, I can truly ſay, Oh my God, have been the delight of my heart, and have had their effect on me, thro' my whole life; for I have been continually heap'd

with thy bleſſings, and thy croſs. My principal attraction, beſides that of ſuffering for thee, has been to yield myſelf up without reſiſtance, interiorly and exteriorly, to all thy divine diſpoſals; and theſe gifts which I was favoured with from the beginning, have continued and encreaſed untill now,—for thou haſt thyſelf guided my continual croſſes, and led me thro' paths impenetrable to all but thee.

THEY ſent me pomatums to recover my complexion, and to fill up the hollows of the ſmall-pox. I had ſeen wonderful effects from it upon others, and therefore at firſt had a mind to try them: But love, jealous of his work, would not ſuffer it. There was a voice in my heart which ſaid, "If I would have had thee fair, I ſhould "have left thee as thou wert." I was therefore obliged to lay aſide every remedy, and to go into the air, which made the pitting worſe, and to expoſe myſelf in the ſtreets to the eyes of every one, when the redneſs of the ſmall-pox was at the worſt, in order to make my humiliation triumph, where I had exalted my pride.

MY huſband kept his bed almoſt all that time, and made good uſe of his indiſpoſition. Only as he now loſt that, which before had given him ſo much pleaſure in viewing me, he grew much more ſuſceptible of impreſſions which any gave him againſt me. In conſequence of this, the perſons who ſpoke to him to my diſadvantage, finding themſelves now better hearkened to, ſpoke more boldly and more frequently. There was only thou, oh my GOD, who changed not for me. Thou redoubled thy interior

terior graces, in proportion as thou augmented my exterior croſſes.

CHAP. XVI.

MY waiting-maid became every day more haughty: And, as the devil incited her to torment me. ſeeing that her ſcoldings and outcries did not now torment me, ſhe thought, if ſhe could hinder me from going to the communion, ſhe ſhould give me the greateſt of all vexations. She was not miſtaken, oh divine ſpouſe of pure ſouls, ſince the only ſatisfaction of my life was to receive and to honour thee. I procured, as much as was in my power, the churches to be well adorned. I gave every thing, of the fineſt I had, to furniſh them with ornaments, and contributed to the utmoſt extent of my abilities, to make them have ſilver plates and chalices. "Oh my Love, I cried, let me "be thy victim! Spare nothing to annihilate "me." I felt an inexpreſſible longing to be more reduced, and to become, as it were, a Nothing.

THIS girl then knew my affection for the holy ſacrament, where, when I could have liberty for it, I paſſed ſeveral hours on my knees*. She took it in her head to watch me daily. When ſhe diſcovered my going thither, ſhe ran to tell my mother-in-law and my huſband. There needed no more to chagrine them. Their in-

vectives

* The Churches in France are commonly open, and the Communion Table laid out, ſo that perſons have continually an opportunity of reſorting there, and performing their devotions as in private.

vectives lafted the whole day. If a word eſcaped me in my own juſtification, it was enough to make them ſay, I was guilty of ſacrilege, and to raiſe an outcry againſt all devotion. If I made them no anſwer at all, they ſtill heightened their indignation, and made them ſay the moſt grating things they could deviſe. If I fell ſick, which often happened, they took occaſion to come to quarrel with me in my bed, ſaying, my communions and prayers were what made me ſick; as if there had been nothing elſe could make me ill, but my devotions to thee, oh my Love!—

She told me one day, in her paſſion, that ſhe was going to write to him who ſhe thought was my director, to get him to ſtop me from going to the communion, for that he did not know me. And when I made her no anſwer, ſhe cried out as loud as ſhe could, "that I treated her ill and "deſpiſed her." When I went out to go to prayers, (though I had taken care before to order every thing about the houſe) "ſhe ran to tell my huſband that I was gone abroad, and had left no-"thing in order." When I returned home, rage fell on me in all its violence; they would hear none of my reaſons, but ſaid, "they were "all a pack of lies." My mother-in-law perſuaded my huſband, "that I let every thing go "to wreck and that, if ſhe did not take care, "he would be ruined." He believed it, and I bore all with patience, endeavouring, as well as I could, to do my duty. What gave moſt trouble was the not knowing what courſe to take; for when I ordered any thing without her, ſhe complained "that I ſhewed her no reſpect, that I did "things of my own head, and they were done "al-

"always the worſe for it." Then ſhe would order them quite contrary: If I conſulted her to know what, or how ſhe would have any thing to be done, ſhe ſaid, "ſhe muſt have the care "and trouble of every thing."

I had ſcarce any reſt but what I found in the love of thy will, oh my God, and ſubmiſſion to thy orders, however rigourous they might be. They inceſſantly watched my words and actions to find occaſion againſt me. They chid me all the day long, continually repeating, and harping over and over, the ſame things, and that even before the footmen. How often have I made my meals on my tears, which were interpreted as the moſt criminal in the world! They ſaid, I would be damn'd; as if the tears would open a hell for me, which ſurely they were more likely to extinguiſh. If I recited any thing I had heard, they would render me accountable for the truth of it. If I kept ſilence, they taxed me with contempt and perverſeneſs; if I knew any thing without telling it, that was a crime; if I told it, then they ſaid, "I had forged it." Sometimes they tormented me for ſeveral days ſucceſſively, without giving me any relaxation. The girls ſaid, "I "ought to feign ſickneſs, to get a little reſt." I made no reply. The love of God ſo cloſely poſſeſſed me, that it would not allow me to ſeek relief by a ſingle word, or even by a look. Sometimes I ſaid in myſelf, "Oh, that I had but any "one who would take notice of me, or to whom "I might unboſom myſelf, what relief to me "would it be!" But it was not granted me.

Yet if I happened to be for ſome days freed from the exterior croſs, it was a moſt ſenſible diſ-

treſs to me, and indeed a puniſhment more difficult to bear than the ſevereſt trials—I then comprehended what St. Thereſa ſays, "let me "ſuffer or die." For this abſence of the croſs, was ſo grievous to me, that I languiſhed with the ardency of deſire for its return.—But no ſooner was this earneſt longing granted, and the bleſſed croſs returned again, than ſtrange as it may ſeem, it appeared ſo weighty and burdenſome, as to be almoſt inſupportable.

THOUGH I loved my father extremely, and he loved me very tenderly, yet I never ſpoke to him of my ſufferings. One of my relations, who loved me much, perceived the little moderation they uſed toward me. They ſpoke very roughly to me before him. He was highly diſpleaſed, and told my father of it, adding, that I ſhould paſs for a fool. Soon after I went to ſee my father, who, contrary to his cuſtom, ſharply reprimanded me, "for ſuffering them to treat me in ſuch a "manner, without ſaying any thing in my own "defence adding every one talk'd of me for it; "that it looked as if I had neither ſenſe or ſpirit to vindicate myſelf." I anſwered, "If they "remarked what my huſband ſaid to me, that "was confuſion enough for me without my "bringing any more of it on myſelf by replies; "that if they did not remark it, I ought not "to cauſe it to be obſerved, nor expoſe my "huſband's weakneſs; that remaining ſilent "ſtoped all diſputes, whereas I might cauſe "them to be continued and increaſed, by my "replies." My father anſwered, "I did well, "and that I ſhould continue to act as GOD "ſhould inſpire me:" And after that, he never ſpoke to me of it any more.

THEY

THEY were ever talking to me againſt my father, whom I moſt tenderly loved and reſpected, againſt my relations, and all ſuch as I eſteemed moſt. I felt this more keenly than all they could ſay againſt myſelf. I could not forbear defending them, and therein I did wrong; as whatever I ſaid ſerved only to provoke them. If any complained of my father or relations, they were always in the right. If any, whom they had diſliked before, ſpoke againſt them, they were preſently approved of. If any ſhewed friendſhip to me, ſuch were not welcome. A relation whom I greatly loved for her piety, coming to ſee me, they openly bid her be gone, or treated her in ſuch a manner as obliged her to it, which gave me no ſmall uneaſineſs. When any conſiderable perſon came, they would be ſpeaking againſt me; even to perſons who knew me not, which ſurprized them: But when they ſaw me they pitied me.

WHATEVER they ſaid againſt me, love would not allow me to juſtify myſelf. I ſpoke not to my huſband of what either my mother-in-law or the girl did to me, except the firſt year, when I was not ſufficiently touched with the power of GOD, to ſuffer ſuch treatment. Nay, I did more than this; for as my mother-in-law and my huſband were both paſſionate, they often quarrelled. Then I was in favour, and to me they made their mutual complaints. I never told the one what the other had ſaid. And though it might have been of ſervice to me, humanly ſpeaking, to take the advantage of ſuch opportunities, I never made uſe of them to complain of either: Nay, on the contrary, I did not reſt till I had reconciled them, I ſpoke many obliging things

of

of the one to the other which always made them friends again: though I knew by frequent experience that I ſhould pay dear for their re-union: For ſcarce were they reconciled, but they joined together againſt me.

I WAS ſo deeply engaged within, as often to forget things without, yet not any thing which was of conſequence. My huſband was haſty, and this inattention frequently irritated him. I walked into the garden, without obſerving any thing there: And when my huſband, who could not go thither, aſked me about it, I knew not what to ſay, at which he was angry. I went thither on purpoſe to remark every thing, in order to tell him about them; and yet when there, did not think of looking at them, I went ten times one day, to ſee and bring him an account of them, and yet ſtill forgot it. But when I did remember to look at them, I was much pleaſed; yet it generally happened I was then aſked nothing about them.

WHEN they were telling any news; to mortify my curioſity, I uſed, under ſome pretext or other to retire. When my huſband afterward would be talking to me about it, I betrayed my ignorance of the matter, and then put him into a freſh fit of rage againſt me, which I would gladly have avoided being the occaſion of; as I was very deſirous of doing my duty, and rendering every thing agreeable to him, ſo far as was in my power.

ALL my croſſes to me would have ſeemed little, if I might have had liberty to pray, and to be alone, to indulge the interior attention which I felt.—

I felt.—But I was obliged ſtill to continue in their preſence with ſuch a ſubjection as is ſcarcely conceivable. My huſband looked on his watch, if at any time I had liberty allowed me for prayer, to ſee if I ſtayed above half an hour. If I exceeded it, he grew very uneaſy. Sometimes I ſaid to him, "Grant me one hour to di-"vert myſelf and employ as I have a mind." And though he would have granted it to me for other diverſions, yet for prayer he would not. I confeſs inexperience cauſed me much trouble, and I have often thereby given occaſion for what they made me ſuffer: For ought I not to have looked on my captivity as an effect of the will of my GOD, to content myſelf therein, and to make it my only deſire and prayer? But I often fell back again into the anxiety of wiſhing to get time for prayer; which was not agreeable to my huſband. It is true thoſe faults were more frequent in the beginning. Afterwards I prayed to GOD in his own retreat, in the temple of my heart, and then I went out no more.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

WE went into the country, where I committed many faults, letting myſelf go too much after my inward attraction. I thought I might do it then becauſe my huſband diverted himſelf with building. If I ſtayed from him any time he was diſſatisfied, which ſometimes happened, as he was continually talking with the workmen. I ſet myſelf in a corner, and there had my work with me, but could ſcarce do any thing by reaſon of the force of the attraction which made the work fall out of my hands. I paſſed whole hours this way, without being able either to open my eyes or know what paſſed in me; but I had nothing to wiſh for, nor yet to be afraid of. Every where I found my proper center, becauſe every where I found GOD.

MY heart could then deſire nothing but what it had; for this diſpoſition extinguiſhed all its deſires; and I ſometimes ſaid to myſelf, "What "wanteſt thou? What feareſt thou?" And I was ſurprized to find upon trial that I had nothing to fear. Every place I was in was my proper place.

As I had generally no time allowed me for prayer but with difficulty, and would not be ſuffered to riſe till ſeven o'clock, my bed being in my huſbands room on account of his illneſs—I ſtole up at four and kneeling in my bed continued there while he thought me aſleep, for I wiſhed not to offend him, and ſtrove to be punctual and aſſiduous in every thing.—But this ſoon affected my

my health and injured my eyes, which were ſtill very weak, it being but eight months ſince I had the ſmall-pox.—This loſs of reſt brought a heavy tryal on me, for as even my ſleeping hours were much broken, by the fear of not waking in time—I inſenſibly dropt aſleep at my prayers, even the half hour that I got after dinner, tho' I felt quite wakeful yet drowſineſs overpowered me. I endeavoured to remedy this by the ſevereſt bodily inflictions but in vain.

As we had not yet built the chapel and were far from any church, I could not go to prayers or Sacrament, without the permiſſion of my huſband—and he was very reluctant to ſuffer me except on ſundays and holydays.—I could not go out in the coach, ſo that I was obliged to make uſe of ſome ſtratagems, and to get ſervice performed very early in the morning, to which feeble as I was I made a ſhift to creep on foot, altho it was a Quarter of a league diſtance. And really GOD wrought wonders for me: For generally, in the mornings when I went to prayers, my huſband did not wake till after I was returned: Often, as I was going out, the weather was ſo cloudy, that the girl I took with me told me, "I could not go; or if I did, I ſhould "be ſoaked with the rain." I anſwered her with my uſual confidence, "GOD will aſſiſt us." I generally reached the chapel without being wet: When got thither, the rain fell exceſſively. When I returned it ceaſed. When I got home it began again with freſh violence. During ſeveral years that I have acted this way, I have never been deceived in my confidence. When I was in town, and could find nobody up, to be ſeen, I was ſurprized that there came to me prieſts to aſk

aſk me if I was willing to receive the communion, and that if I was they would give it to me. I had no mind to refuſe, oh my Love, the opportunity which thou thyſelf offeredſt me; for I had no doubt of its being thee who inſpired them to propoſe it. Before I had contrived to get divine ſervice at the chapel I have mentioned, I have often ſuddenly awaked with a ſtrong impulſe to go to prayers. My mind would ſay to me, "But, madam, you are going to "tire yourſelf in vain. There will be no ſer-"vice there." For that chapel was not yet regularly ſerved: However I went full of faith, and at my arrival have found them juſt ready to begin. If I could particularly enumerate the remarkable providences, which were hereupon given in my favour, there would be enough to fill whole volumes with.

When I wanted to hear from, or write to, Mother Granger, I often felt a ſtrong propenſity to go to the door. There I found a meſſenger with a letter from her, which could not have fallen into my hands but for that. But this is only a ſmall inſtance of theſe kind of continual providences. She was the only perſon I could be free to lay open my ſtate to, when I could get to ſee her, which was with the greateſt difficulty; and thro' providential aſſiſtance; having not only been prohibited by my confeſſor and huſband, but all means, that could be deviſed, were put in practice by my mother-in-law to prevent it. I placed an extreme confidence in Mother Granger. I concealed nothing from her, either of my ſins or my pains. I would not have done the leaſt thing without telling her. I did not

not now practiſe any auſterities but thoſe ſhe was willing to allow me. There was nothing which I kept from her but my interior diſpoſitions, theſe I was ſcarce able to tell, becauſe I knew not how to explain myſelf thereon, being very ignorant of thoſe matters, having never read or heard of them.

One day when they thought I was going to ſee my father, I ran off to Mother Granger. It was diſcovered, and coſt me ſuch croſſes as I cannot expreſs; their rage againſt me, was ſo exceſſive that it would be incredible, even my writing to her was extremely difficult. For as I had the utmoſt abhorrence of a lie, I forbad the footman to tell any. When they were met they were aſked whither they were going, and if they had not any letters. My mother-in-law ſet herſelf in a little paſſage, through which thoſe who went out muſt neceſſarily paſs by her. She aſked them whither they were going and what they carried. Sometimes going on foot to the *Benedictines*, I cauſed ſhoes to be carried, that they might not perceive by the dirty ones that I had been far. I durſt not go alone; and thoſe who attended me had orders to tell every place I went to. If they were diſcovered to fail in doing it, they were either corrected or turned out of their ſervice.

My huſband and mother-in-law were always inveighing againſt that good woman, tho' in reality they eſteemed her. I ſometimes made my own complaint to her; and ſhe replied "How "ſhould you content them, when I have been "doing all in my power for theſe twenty years to ſatisfy them without ſucceſs?" For as my mother-

ther-in-law had two daughters under her care, ſhe was always finding ſomething to ſay againſt every thing ſhe did in regard to them.

But the moſt ſenſible croſs to me now was the revolting of my own ſon againſt me, whom they inſpired with ſo great a contempt for me, that I could not bear to ſee him without extreme affliction. When I was in my chamber with ſome of my friends they ſent him to liſten to what we ſaid; and as he ſaw this pleaſed them he invented a hundred things to tell them. What gave me the ſevereſt pang was the loſs of my child. If I caught him in a lie, as frequently I did, he would upbraid me ſaying, "My grandmother "ſays, you have been a greater liar than I." I anſwered him, "Therefore I know the deformity of that vice, and how hard a thing "it is to get the better of it: And for this reaſon, "I would not have you ſuffer the like." He ſpoke to me things very offenſive; and becauſe he remarked the awe I ſtood in of his grandmother and his father, if in their abſence I found fault with him for any thing, he inſultingly upbraided me, and ſaid, "That now I wanted to "ſet up for his miſtreſs, becauſe they were not "there." All this they approved of, in ſo much as to ſtrengthen him in his moſt perverſe inclinations. One day he went to ſee my father, and raſhly began talking againſt me to him, as he was uſed to do to his grandmother. But there it did not meet with the ſame recompence. It affected my father to tears; he came to our houſe to deſire he might be corrected for it. they promiſed it ſhould be done, and yet they never did it. I was grievouſly afraid of the conſequences of

of ſo bad an education. I told Mother Granger of it, who conſoled me, and ſaid, "That ſince I could not remedy it, I muſt ſuffer and "leave every thing to God; and that this child "would be my croſs."

Another great croſs was the difficulty I had in attending my huſband. I knew he was diſpleaſed when I was not with him; and yet when I was with him, he never expreſſed any pleaſure in it, nor at any thing I did. On the contrary, he only rejected with ſcorn whatever office I performed. He was ſo very uneaſy with me about every thing, that I ſometimes trembled when I approached him. I could do nothing to his liking; and when I did not attend him, he was angry. He had taken ſuch a diſlike to ſoups, that he could not bear the ſight of them; and thoſe that offered them had ſo rough a reception, that neither his mother nor any of the domeſticks would carry them to him. There was none but I who did not refuſe that office. I brought them to him, and let his anger paſs; then tried in ſome agreeable manner to prevail on him to take them. And when his paſſion increaſed, I waited with patience, after which I ſaid to him, "I had ra"ther be reprimanded ſeveral times a day, than "let you ſuffer by not bringing you what is pro"per." Sometime he took them; at other times puſhed them back. But as he ſaw my perſeverance, he would at length ſubmit to take them.

When he was in good humour, and I was carrying ſomething agreeable to him, then my mother-in-law would ſnatch it out of my hands, and carry it herſelf. And as he thought I was not ſo careful and ſtudious to pleaſe him, he

would fly in a rage againſt me, and expreſs great thankfulneſs to his mother. I ſilently ſuffered it all: I uſed all my ſkill and endeavours to gain my mother-in-law's favour by my aſſiduities, my preſents, my ſervices; but was not lucky enough to ſucceed. How bitter and grievous, oh my GOD, would ſuch a life be were it not for thee? But thou haſt ſweetened and reconciled it to me. I had a few very ſhort intervals from this ſevere and mortifying life; but theſe ſerved only to make the reverſes more keen and bitter.

CHAP. XVIII.

ABOUT eight or nine months after my recovery from the ſmall-pox, Father LA COMBE, paſſing by our houſe, brought me a letter from Father de la MOTTE,* recommending him to my eſteem, and expreſſing the higheſt friendſhip for him. I heſitated much, for I was very loth to make new acquaintances, but the fear of offending my brother prevailed. After a ſhort converſation we both deſired a farther opportunity. I thought that he either loved GOD, or was diſpoſed to love him, and I wiſhed every body to love him. GOD had already made uſe of me for the converſion of three of his order. The ſtrong deſire he had of ſeeing me again induced him to come to our country-houſe, which was about half a league from the town. A little accident which happened opened a way for me to ſpeak

* He was a Bernabite, half brother of Lady Guion, by the father, a malevolent, ſelfiſh eccleſiaſtic, as we ſhall ſee in the ſecond and third parts.

ſpeak to him. As he was in diſcourſe with my huſband, who reliſhed his company, he was taken ill, and retired into the garden. My huſband ſoon bade me go and ſee what was the matter with him. I went: He told me he had remarked in my countenance, a deep inwardneſs and preſence of GOD, which had given him a ſtrong deſire of ſeeing me again: And GOD then aſſiſted me to open to him the interior path of the ſoul, and conveyed ſo much grace to him through this poor channel, that he has owned to me ſince, that he went away, changed into quite another man. I preſerved an eſteem for him; for it appeared to me that he would be devoted to GOD; but little did I then foreſee, that I ſhould ever be led to the place where he was to reſide.

MY diſpoſition at this time, as I have ſaid, was a continual prayer, without knowing it to be ſuch; for the preſence of GOD was ſo plentifully given, that it ſeemed to be more in me than my very ſelf. The ſenſibility thereof was ſo powerful, ſo penetrating, it ſeemed to me irreſiſtible; and love took from me all liberty of my own. At other times I was ſo dry, I felt nothing but the pain of abſence, which was the keener to me, as the divine Preſence had before been ſo ſenſible. In theſe alternatives, when love was preſent, I forgot in ſuch a manner all my troubles and pains, that it appeared to me as if I never had experienced any: And, in its abſence, it ſeemed as if it never would return again. I ſtill thought it was through ſome fault of mine it was withdrawn, and that rendered me inconſolable. Had I known it had been a ſtate through which it was neceſſary to paſs, I ſhould not have been troubled; for my ſtrong

love to the will of GOD would have rendered every thing eaſy to me; the property of this prayer being to give a great love to the order of GOD, with ſo ſublime and perfect a reliance on him, as to fear nothing, whether dangers, thunder, ſpirits, or death. It gives a great abſtraction from one's ſelf, their own intereſts and reputation, with an utter diſregard to every thing of the kind; all being ſwallowed up in the eſteem of the will of GOD.

AT home, I was accuſed of every thing that was ill done, ſpoiled or broken. At firſt I told the truth, and ſaid it was not I; they perſiſted, and accuſed me of lying. I then made no reply. Beſides, they told all their tales to ſuch as came to the houſe. But when I was afterwards alone with the ſame perſons, I never undeceived them. I often heard ſuch things ſaid of me, before my friends, as were enough to make them entertain a bad opinion of me. My mind kept its habitation in the tacit conſciouſneſs of my own innocence, not concerning myſelf whether they thought well or ill of me; excluding all the world, all opinions or cenſures, out of my view, and minding nothing elſe but the friendſhip of GOD only.

IF through infidelity I happened at any time to juſtify myſelf, I always failed, and drew upon myſelf new croſſes, both within and without; but notwithſtanding all this, I was ſo enamoured with it, that the greateſt croſs of all would have been to be without any. When the croſs was taken from me for any ſhort ſpace, it ſeemed to me that it was becauſe of the bad uſe I made of it; and that my unfaithfulneſs deprived me of

of ſo great an advantage; for I never knew its value better than in its loſs. Oh, dear croſs, my faithful companion! As my Saviour became incarnate, only to die in thy arms, ſhould not I be conformable to him in that: And wilt not thou be the means of uniting me to him for ever? O my Love, I cried, puniſh me any way, but take not the croſs from me. This amiable croſs returned to me with ſo much the more weight, as my deſire was more vehement. I could not reconcile two things, they appeared to me ſo very oppoſite: *viz.* To deſire the croſs with ſo much ardour, and to ſupport it with ſo much difficulty and pain.

GOD knows well, in the admirable œconomy he obſerves, how to render the croſſes more weighty, conformable to the ability of the creature to bear them; giving them always ſomething new and unexpected. Hereby my ſoul began to be more reſigned, and to comprehend that the ſtate of abſence, and of wanting what I longed for, was in its turn, more profitable than that of always abounding; becauſe this latter nouriſhed *ſelf-love*. If GOD did not act thus, the ſoul would never die to itſelf. That principle of *ſelf-love* is ſo crafty and dangerous, that it cleaves to every thing.

WHAT gave me moſt uneaſineſs, in this time of darkneſs and crucifixion, both within and without, was an inconceivable readineſs to be quick and haſty. When any anſwer a little too lively eſcaped me, (which ſerved not a little to humble me,) they ſaid, "I was fallen into a "mortal ſin." A conduct no leſs rigorous than this was quite neceſſary for me; for I was ſo

proud, paſſionate, and of a humour naturally thwarting, wanting always to carry matters my own way, and thinking my own reaſons better than thoſe of others; that, hadſt thou, oh my GOD! ſpared the ſtrokes of thy hammer, I ſhould never have been formed to thy will, to be an inſtrument for thy uſe; for I was ridiculouſly vain. Applauſe rendered me intolerable. I praiſed my friends to exceſs, and blamed others without reaſon: But, the more criminal I have been, the more I am indebted to thee, and the leſs of any good can I attribute to myſelf. Oh, how blind are men who attribute to others the holineſs that GOD gives them! I believe, my GOD, that thou haſt had children, who under thy grace, owed much to their own fidelity; but as for me, I owe all to thee; I glory to confeſs it; I cannot acknowledge it too much.

IN acts of charity I was very aſſiduous. So great was my tenderneſs for the poor, that I wiſhed to have ſupplied all their wants; I could not ſee their neceſſity, without reproaching myſelf for the plenty I enjoyed. I deprived myſelf of all I could to help them. The very beſt at my table was diſtributed among them. There were few of the poor where I lived, who did not partake of my liberality. It ſeemed as if thou hadſt made me thy only Almoner there, for being refuſed by others, they came all to me. "Oh my divine Love! I cried, it is thy ſub-"ſtance; I am only the ſteward of it. I ought "to diſtribute it according to thy will." I found means to relieve them without letting myſelf be known, becauſe I had one who diſpenſed my alms privately. When there were families who were aſhamed to take it in this way, I

ſent it to them as if I owed them a debt. I clothed ſuch as were naked, and cauſed young girls to be taught how to earn their livelihood, eſpecially ſuch as were handſome, to the end that being employed, and having whereon to live, they might not be under a temptation to throw themſelves away. GOD made uſe of me to reclaim ſeveral from their diſorderly lives; and there was one of beauty and diſtinction, who has ſince made a happy end. I went to viſit the ſick, to comfort them, to make their beds. I made ointments, dreſſed their wounds, buried their dead. I privately furniſhed tradeſmen and mechanics wherewith to keep up their ſhops. My heart was much opened toward my fellow-creatures in diſtreſs; And few indeed could carry charity much farther than our Lord enabled me to do, according to my ſtate, both while married and ſince.

TO purify me the more from the mixture I might make of his gifts with my own *ſelf-love*, he gave me interior probations, which were very heavy. I began to experience an inſupportable weight, in that very piety which had formerly been ſo eaſy and delightful to me; not that I did not love it extremely, but I found myſelf defective in that noble practice of it, to which I aſpired. The more I loved it, the more I laboured to acquire what I ſaw I failed in. But alas! I ſeemed continually to be overcome by that which was contrary to it. My heart, indeed, was detached from all ſenſual pleaſures. For theſe ſeveral years paſt, it has ſeemed to me that my mind is ſo detached and abſent from the body, that I do things as if I did them not. If I eat or refreſhed

myſelf, it is done with ſuch an abſence, or ſeparation, as I wonder at, and with an entire mortification of the keenneſs of ſenſation in all the natural functions.

CHAP. XIX.

TO reſume the thread of my hiſtory, the ſmall-pox had ſo much hurt one of my eyes, that it was feared I ſhould loſe it. The gland at the corner of my eye was much injured. An impoſthume aroſe from time to time between the noſe and the eye, which gave me exquiſite pain till it was lanced. It ſwelled all my head to that degree, that I could not bear even a pillow. The leaſt noiſe was an agony to me, though ſometimes they made a great one in my chamber; and yet this was a precious time to me, for two reaſons; the firſt, becauſe I was left in bed alone, where I had a ſweet retreat without interruption; the other, becauſe it anſwered the deſire which I had after ſuffering, which deſire was ſo great, that all the auſterities of the body would have been but as a drop of water to quench ſo great a fire; and indeed the ſeverities and rigours which I then exerciſed were extreme—but they appeaſed not at all this appetite for the croſs.—For 'tis thou alone, Oh Crucified SAVIOUR, who canſt frame the Croſs, truly effectual for the death of SELF. Let others bleſs themſelves in their eaſe or gaiety, grandeur or pleaſures, poor temporary heavens: As for me, my deſires were all turned another way, even to the ſilent path of ſuffering for CHRIST, and to be united to him, through the mortification of all that was of nature

ture in me, that my ſenſes, appetites and will, being dead to theſe, might wholly live in him.

I obtained leave to go to *Paris* for the cure of my eye; and yet it was much more thro' the deſire I had to ſee Monſieur BERTOT, a man of profound experience, whom Mother GRANGER had lately aſſigned to me for my director. I went to take my leave of my father, who embraced me with peculiar tenderneſs, little thinking then that it would be our laſt adieu.

PARIS was a place now no longer to be dreaded as in times paſt. The throngs only ſerved to draw me into a deep recollection, and the noiſe of the ſtreets but augmented my inward prayer. I ſaw Monſieur BERTOT, who did not prove of that ſervice to me, which he would have done if I had then had the power to explain myſelf: But though I wiſhed earneſtly to hide nothing from him, yet GOD held me ſo cloſe to himſelf, that I could tell him ſcarce any thing at all. As ſoon as I ſpoke to him every thing was vaniſhed from my mind, ſo that I could remember nothing but ſome few faults which I told him. As I ſaw him very ſeldom, and nothing ſtayed in my recollection, and as I read of nothing any way reſembling my caſe, I knew not how to open myſelf upon it. Beſide I deſired to make nothing known, but the evil which was in me. Therefore Monſieur BERTOT knew me not till after his death. This was of great utility to me, for taking away every ſupport, and making me truly die to myſelf.

I WENT to paſs the ten days, from the aſcenſion to whitſuntide, at an Abbey four leagues from

from *Paris*, the Abbeſs of which had a particular friendſhip for me. Here my union with God ſeemed to be deeper and more continual, becoming always ſimple, but at the ſame time more cloſe and intimate.

One day I awaked ſuddenly at four o'clock in the morning, with a ſtrong impreſſion on my mind, that my father was dead; and though at the ſame time my ſoul was in a very great contentment, yet my love for him affected it with ſorrow, and my body with weakneſs. Under the ſtrokes and daily troubles which befel me, my will was ſo ſubſervient to thine, oh my God, that it appeared abſolutely united to it. There ſeemed indeed to be no will left in me but thine only. My own diſappeared, and no deſires, tendencies or inclinations were left, but to the one ſole object of whatever was moſt pleaſing to thee, be it what it would. If I had a will, it was in union with thine, as two well tuned lutes in concert: That which is not touched renders the ſame ſound as that which is touched: It is but one and the ſame ſound, one pure harmony. It is this union of the will which eſtabliſhes in perfect peace. Yet though my own will was loſt, as to its operations, I have found ſince, in the ſtrange ſtates I have been obliged to paſs through, how much it had yet to coſt me to have it totally loſt, as to all its properties in all the circumſtances, and whole extent thereof, in order that the ſoul ſhould retain no more any intereſt or deſire of its own, of either time or eternity, but only the intereſt of God alone, in the manner that is known to himſelf, and not in our way of conceiving. How many ſouls are there which

which think their own wills quite loſt, while they are yet very far from it! They would find they ſtill ſubſiſt, if they met with hard probations. Who is there who does not wiſh ſomething for himſelf, either of intereſt, wealth, honour, pleaſure, conveniency, liberty, &c.? And he who thinks his mind looſe from all theſe objects, becauſe he poſſeſſes them, would ſoon perceive his attachment to them, were he ſtripped of thoſe he is poſſeſſed of. If there are found in a whole age three perſons ſo dead to every thing, as to be utterly reſigned to providence without any exception, they may well paſs for prodigies of grace.—As I am not miſtreſs of what I write, I follow not any order:—But it makes little matter.

In the afternoon as I was with the Abbeſs, I told her I had ſtrong preſentiments of my father's death. Indeed I could hardly ſpeak, I was ſo affected within, and enfeebled without. Preſently came one to tell her that ſhe was wanted in the parlour. It was a man that had rid poſt, and was come expreſs, with an account from my huſband that my father was ill. And as I afterwards found it held him only twelve hours, he was therefore by this time dead. The Abbeſs returning ſays, "Here is a letter from your "huſband who writes that your father is taken "violently ill." I ſaid to her, "He is dead, I "cannot have a doubt about it." I ſent away to *Paris* immediately, to hire a coach, to go the ſooner. Mine waited for me at the Midway. I went off at nine o'clock at night. They ſaid, "I was going to deſtroy myſelf," for I had no acquaintance with me; as I had ſent away my maid to *Paris*, to put every thing in order there; and being in a religious houſe, I had no mind to keep

keep any footman with me there. The Abbeſs told me, " that ſince I thought my father was " dead, it would be raſhneſs in me to expoſe " myſelf, and run the riſque of my life in that " manner; that coaches could hardly paſs the " way I was going, it being no beaten road." I anſwered, " That it was my indiſpenſible duty " to go to aſſiſt my father, and that I ought not, " on a bare apprehenſion, to exempt myſelf from " it." I went then alone, abandoned to Providence, with people unknown. My weakneſs was ſo great, that I could hardly keep my ſeat in the coach, and yet I was often forced to alight, on account of dangerous ſpots in the road.

In this way was I obliged, about midnight, to croſs a foreſt, notorious for murders and robberies. The moſt intrepid dreaded it; but my reſignation left me ſcarce any room to think at all about it.—Oh what fears and uneaſineſs does a reſigned ſoul ſpare itſelf!—Thus all alone I arrived within five leagues of my own habitation, where, I found my confeſſor who had oppoſed me, with one of my relations waiting for me. The ſweet conſolation I had enjoyed, when alone, was now interrupted. My confeſſor, ignorant of my ſtate, reſtrained me intirely. My grief was of ſuch a nature that I could not ſhed a tear. And I was aſhamed to hear a thing which I knew but too well, without giving any exterior mark of grief. The inward and profound peace I enjoyed dawned on my countenance, and the ſtate I was in did not permit me to ſpeak, or to do ſuch things as are uſually expected from perſons of piety. I could do nothing but love and be ſilent.

I FOUND

I FOUND on my arrival at home, that my father was already buried, on account of the exceſſive heat.—It was ten o'clock at night. All wore the habit of mourning.—I had travelled thirty leagues in a day and a night. As I was very weak, not having taken any nouriſhment, I was inſtantly put to bed.

ABOUT two o'clock in the morning my huſband got up, and having gone out of my chamber, he returned preſently, crying out with all his might, " My daughter is dead."—She was my only daughter, as dearly beloved as truly lovely. She had ſo many graces both of body and mind conferred on her, that one muſt have been inſenſible not to have loved her. She had an extraordinary ſhare of love to GOD. Often was ſhe found in corners at prayer. As ſoon as ſhe perceived me at prayer, ſhe came and joined me, and if ſhe diſcovered that I had been at it without her, ſhe would weep bitterly and cry, " Ah mama you pray but I dont,"—when we were alone and ſhe ſaw my eyes cloſed—ſhe'd whiſper, " are you aſleep" and then cry out, Ah no, you are praying to our dear JESUS, and dropping on her knees before me ſhe would begin to pray too. She was ſeveral times whipt by her grandmother, becauſe ſhe ſaid, " She " would never have any other huſband but our " LORD," yet could ſhe never make her ſay otherwiſe. She was innocent and modeſt as a little angel; very dutiful and endearing, and withal very beautiful. Her father doated on her, and to me ſhe was very dear, much more for the qualities of her mind than thoſe of her beautiful perſon. I looked upon her as my only conſolation on earth: For ſhe had as much affection

for

for me, as her brother had averſion and contempt. She died of an unſeaſonable bleeding: But what ſhall I ſay? ſhe died by the hands of him who was pleaſed, for wiſe reaſons of his own, to ſtrip me of all.

THERE now remained to me only the ſon of my ſorrow. He fell ill to the point of death, but was reſtored at the prayer of Mother GRANGER, now my only conſolation after GOD. I no more wept for my child than for my father. I could only ſay, "Thou, oh LORD, gave her to "me; it pleaſes thee to take her back again, "for ſhe was thine." As for my father, his virtue was ſo generally known, that I muſt rather be ſilent, than enter upon the ſubject. His reliance on GOD, his faith and patience were wonderful. Both died in July 1672. From henceforth croſſes were not ſpared me: And tho' I have had abundance of them hitherto, yet they were only the ſhadows of thoſe which I have been ſince obliged to paſs through, purſuant to a marriage contract, which I had newly entered into with our LORD JESUS CHRIST. In this ſpiritual mariage I claimed for my dowry only croſſes, ſcourges, perſecutions, ignominies, lowlineſs, and nothingneſs of ſelf, which in his great goodneſs, and for wiſe ends, as I have ſeen, he has been pleaſed to grant and confer upon me.

ONE day being in great diſtreſs, on account of the redoubling of outward and inward croſſes, I went into my cloſet to give vent to my grief. M. BERTOT, was brought into my mind, with this wiſh, *Oh that he was ſenſible of what I ſuffer!* Tho' he wrote but very ſeldom, and with great difficulty, yet he wrote me a letter dated

dated the ſame day about the croſs, the fineſt and moſt conſolatory he ever wrote me on that ſubject. Sometimes my ſpirit was ſo oppreſſed with continual croſſes, which ſcarce gave me any relaxation, that when alone my eyes turned every way, to ſee if they could find any thing to give ſome relief. A word, a ſigh, a triſle, or to know that any one took part in my grief, would have been ſome comfort; but that was not granted me, not even to look toward heaven, or make any complaint. Love held me then ſo cloſe, that it would have this miſerable nature to periſh, without giving it any ſupport or nouriſhment.

Oh my deareſt LORD! thou yet gave my ſoul a victorious ſupport, which made it triumph over all the weakneſſes of *nature*, and ſeized thy knife to ſacrifice *it* without ſparing. And yet this nature ſo perverſe, and full of artifices to ſave its life, at laſt took the courſe of nouriſhing itſelf with its own deſpair, and with its fidelity under ſuch heavy and continual oppreſſion, and withal ſought to conceal the value it attributed thereto: But thy eyes, oh my divine Love, were too penetrating not to detect the ſubtilty. Wherefore, thou, oh my Shepherd, changed thy conduct toward it. Thou ſometimes comforted it with *thy crook and thy ſtaff*; that is to ſay, by thy conduct as loving as crucifying, but it was only to reduce it to the laſt extremity as I ſhall ſhew hereafter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

A LADY of rank, whom I ſometimes viſited, took a particular liking to me, becauſe, (as ſhe was pleaſed to ſay) my perſon and manners were agreeable to her. She ſaid that ſhe obſerved in me ſomething extraordinary and uncommon. I believe it was the inward attraction of my ſoul that appeared on my very countenance: For one day a gentleman of faſhion ſaid to my huſband's aunt, "I ſaw the Lady your "niece; and it is very viſible that ſhe lives in "the preſence of GOD." I was ſurprized at hearing this as I little thought that ſuch an one as he could know what it was to have GOD thus preſent. This lady, I ſay, began to be touched with the ſenſe of GOD: For, wanting once to take me to the play, I refuſed to go; (as I never went to plays,) making uſe of the pretext of my huſband's continual indiſpoſitions. She preſſed me exceedingly, and ſaid, "I ſhould not be "prevented by his ſickneſs from taking ſome a-"muſement; and that I was not of an age to "be confined with the ſick like a nurſe." I told her my reaſons for acting ſo by my huſband. She then perceived that it was more from a principle of piety, than the indiſpoſitions of my huſband, that I did not go. Inſiſting to know my ſentiment of plays, I told her, "I entirely diſ-"approved of them, and eſpecially for a chriſ-"tian woman:" And as ſhe was far more advanced in years than I was, what I then ſaid made ſuch an impreſſion on her mind, that ſhe never after went to them.

BEING

BEING once with her and another lady, who was fond of talking and had read the fathers, they ſpoke much of GOD. This lady ſpoke learnedly of him. I ſaid ſcarce any thing, being inwardly drawn to ſilence, and troubled at ſuch kind of converſation about GOD. My acquaintance, came next day to ſee me, "The LORD "had ſo touched her heart, that ſhe could ſtand "out no longer." I attributed this touch to ſomething the other lady had ſpoken: But ſhe ſaid to me, "Your ſilence had ſomething in it which "penetrated to the bottom of my ſoul: And I "could not reliſh what the other ſaid." Then we ſpoke to one another with open hearts.

IT was then that GOD left indelible impreſſions of his grace on her ſoul, and ſhe continued ſo athirſt for him, that ſhe could ſcarcely endure to converſe on any other ſubject. That ſhe might become wholly his, he deprived her of a moſt affectionate huſband, and viſited her by ſuch ſevere croſſes, and at the ſame time poured his grace ſo abundantly into her heart, that he ſoon became the ſole maſter thereof. After the death of her huſband, and the loſs of moſt of her fortune, ſhe went to reſide four leagues from our houſe, on a ſmall eſtate, which ſhe yet had left. She obtained my huſband's conſent to my going to paſs a week with her, to conſole her under her loſſes. GOD gave her by my means all ſhe wanted. She had a great ſhare of underſtanding but was ſurprized at my expreſſing things to her ſo far above my natural capacity. I ſhould have been ſurprized at it myſelf, had I reflected on it: But it was GOD who gave me the gift for her ſake, diffuſing a flood of grace into her ſoul, without regarding the unworthineſs of the channel he was pleaſed to make uſe of. Since that

time her ſoul has been the temple of the Holy-ghoſt, and our hearts have been indiſſolubly united.

My huſband and I took a little journey together; in which both my reſignation and humility were exerciſed, yet without difficulty or conſtraint, ſo powerful was the influence of divine grace. We had all like to have periſhed in a river: The reſt of the company in a deſperate fright threw themſelves out of the coach, which ſunk in the moving ſand. I continued ſo much inwardly occupied, that I did not once think of the danger. GOD delivered me from it, without my thought of avoiding it. I was quite content to be drowned, had he permitted it. It may be ſaid, "I was raſh;" I believe I was ſo: Yet I rather choſe to periſh, truſting in GOD, than make my eſcape in a dependance on myſelf. But what ſay I? We do not periſh, but for want of truſting in him. My pleaſure is to be indebted to him for every thing. This renders me content in my miſeries, which I would rather endure all my life long, in a ſtate of reſignation to him, than put an end to them, in a dependance on myſelf. However I would not adviſe others to act thus, unleſs they were in the ſame diſpoſition which I was in at that time.

As my huſband's maladies daily increaſed; he reſolved to go to St. REINE, he appeared very deſirous of having none but me with him, and told me one day, "If they never ſpoke to me "againſt you, I ſhould be more eaſy, and you "more happy." In this journey I committed many faults of *ſelf-love* and *ſelf-ſeeking*; and being in a deep interior reſignation, experienced thereby

thereby what I ſhould be without thy fatherly care, oh GOD. For ſome time paſt, thou hadſt withdrawn from me that ſweet interior correſpondence which before I had only to follow. I was become like a poor traveller that had loſt his way in the night, and could find no way, path, or track: But as I reſerve for another place the deſcription of the terrible darkneſs through which I paſſed, I ſhall here continue the thread of my hiſtory. My huſband in his return from St. REINE, paſſed by St EDM. Having now no children but my firſt-born ſon, who was often at the gates of death, he wiſhed exceedingly for heirs, and prayed for them earneſtly. GOD granted his deſire, and gave me a ſecond ſon. The approach of my lying-in was a ſeaſon of great conſolation to me. And though in my delivery I had a ſevere time, the love I had for the croſs made me look on it all with pleaſure. I rejoiced becauſe nature had ſo much to ſuffer. Beſide, as I was ſeveral weeks, after my delivery, without any one daring to ſpeak to me, on account of my great weakneſs, it was a time of retreat and of ſilence, wherein I tried to indemnify myſelf for the loſs of time I had ſuſtained in the others, to pray to thee, my GOD, and to continue alone with thee. I may ſay that during the nine months of my pregnancy, GOD took a new poſſeſſion of me, and left me not. It was a time of continual joy without interruption. As I had experienced many inward difficulties, weakneſſes and withdrawings of my Love, it was a new life. It ſeemed as if I was already in the fruition of beatitude. But how dear did this happy time coſt me, ſince it was only a preparative to a total privation of comfort for ſeveral years, without any ſupport, or hope of return! It be-

gan with the death of Mrs. GRANGER, who had been my only conſolation under GOD. Before my return from St. REINE I heard ſhe was dead.

WHEN I received this news, I confeſs it was the moſt afflicting ſtroke I had ever felt. I thought, had I been with her at her death, I might have ſpoke to her, and received her laſt inſtructions: But GOD has ſo ordered it that I was deprived of her aſſiſtance in almoſt all my loſſes, in order to render the ſtrokes more painful. Some months indeed before her death, it was ſhewn to me, that though I could not ſee her but with extreme difficulty, and ſuffering for it, yet ſhe was ſtill ſome ſupport to me: And the LORD let me know that it would be profitable for me to be deprived of her: But at the time ſhe died I did not think ſo. It was in that trying ſeaſon when my paths were all blocked up, ſhe was taken from me, ſhe who might have guided me in my loneſome and difficult road; bounded as it were with precipices, and entangled with briars and thorns.

OH adorable conduct of my GOD! There muſt be no guide for the perſon whom thou art leading into the regions of darkneſs and death; no conductor for the man whom thou art determined to deſtroy, (*i. e.* to cauſe to die totally to himſelf.) After having ſaved me with ſo much mercy, O my Love; after having led me by the hand in rugged paths, it ſeems thou waſt bent on my deſtruction. May it not be ſaid that thou doſt not ſave but to deſtroy, nor go to ſeek the loſt ſheep, but to cauſe it to be yet more loſt; that thou art pleaſed in building what

what is demoliſhed, and in demoliſhing what is built. Thus thou wouldſt overturn the temple built by human endeavours, with ſo much care and induſtry—in order as it were miraculouſly to erect a divine ſtructure—a houſe not built with hands eternal in the heavens.—Oh ſecrets of the incomprehenſible wiſdom of GOD, unknown to any beſides himſelf!—Yet man, ſprung up only of a few days, wants to penetrate, and to ſet bounds to it. Who is it that hath known the mind of the LORD, or who hath been his counſellor? It is a wiſdom only to be known through death to every thing, and through the entire loſs of all ſelf.

MY brother now openly ſhewed his hatred for me. He married at *Orleans*, and my huſband had the complaiſance to go to his marriage, though he was in a poor ſtate of health, the roads bad, and ſo covered with ſnow, that we had like to have been overſet more than fifteen times: And yet, far from appearing obliged by his politeneſs, my brother quarrelled with him more than ever, and without any reaſon too; and I was the butt of both their reſentments. While I was at *Orleans*, meeting with one whom at that time I thought highly of, I was too forward and free in ſpeaking to him of ſpiritual things, thinking I was doing well, but had a remorſe for it afterwards; which I ſo remembered, that I no more fell into the like fault again. How often does one miſtake nature for grace! One muſt be dead to one's ſelf, when ſuch forwardneſs comes from GOD only.

ON my return, my brother treated me with the utmoſt contempt: Yet, my mind was ſo much

much drawn inward, that though we had much more danger on the road than in going, I had no thought about myſelf, but only about my huſband; ſo that ſeeing the coach overturning, I ſaid, "Fear not, it is on my ſide that it falls; "it will not hurt you." I believe, had all periſhed, I ſhould not have been moved, my peace was ſo profound that nothing could ſhake it. If theſe times continued, we ſhould be too ſtrong. But they now began to come but ſeldom, and were followed with long and wearifome privations. Though ſince that time my brother is changed for the better, and has turned on the ſide of GOD, yet he has never turned to me. It has been by particular permiſſion of GOD, and the conduct of his Providence over my ſoul, that has cauſed him and other religious perſons, who have perſecuted me, to think they were rendering glory to GOD, and doing actions of juſtice therein. And indeed what greater juſtice than that all creatures ſhould be treacherous to me, and declare againſt me, who have too many times been treacherous to GOD, and ſided with the contrary party!

AFTER this there fell out a very perplexing affair. To me it cauſed great croſſes, and ſeemed deſigned for nothing elſe. A certain perſon conceived ſo much malice againſt my huſband, that he was determined to ruin him if poſſible. He found no other way to attempt it, but by entering into a private engagement with my brother; by which he obtained a power to demand, in the name of MONSIEUR, the king's brother, two hundred thouſand livers, which he pretended to make appear that my brother and I owed him. My brother ſigned the proceſſes, upon an aſſurance given

given him, that he ſhould not pay any thing. I think his youth engaged him in what he did not underſtand. This affair ſo chagrined my huſband, that I have room to believe it ſhortened his days. He was ſo angry with me, though I was innocent, that he could not ſpeak to me but in a fury. He would give me no light into the affair, and I did not know in what it conſiſted. In the height of his rage, he ſaid he would not meddle in it, but give me up my portion, and let me live as I could; with many other things ſtill more grating. On the other ſide my brother would not ſtir in it, nor ſuffer it to be done. The day when the trial was to come on. After prayers, I felt myſelf ſtrongly preſſed to go to the judges. I was wonderfully aſſiſted herein, even ſo as to diſcover and unravel all the turns and artifices of this affair, without knowing how I cou. have been able to do it. The firſt judge was ſo ſurprized to ſee the affair ſo very different from what he had thought it before, that he himſelf exhorted me to go to the other judges, and eſpecially to the intendant, who was juſt then going to court, and was quite miſinformed about the matter. GOD enabled me to manifeſt the truth in ſo clear a light, and gave ſuch power to my words, that the intendant thanked me for having ſo ſeaſonably come to undeceive, and ſet him to rights in the affair. Had not I done this, he aſſured me the cauſe had been loſt. And as they ſaw the falſehood of every article, they would have condemned the plaintiff to the coſts, if it had not been ſo great a prince, who lent his name to the officers that deceived him. But to ſave the honour of the prince, they ordered us to pay him fifty crowns. Hereby the two

 hundred

hundred thouſand livres were reduced to only one hundred and fifty. My huſband was exceedingly pleaſed at what I had done: But my brother appeared as outrageous againſt me, as if I had cauſed him ſome very great loſs. Thus moderately and at once ended an affair, which had at firſt appeared ſo very weighty and alarming.

CHAP. XXI.

ABOUT this time I fell into a ſtate of total privation which continued near ſeven years. I ſeemed to myſelf caſt down, as it were, from a throne of enjoyment, like NEBUCHADNEZZAR, to live among beaſts; a deplorable ſtate, yet of the greateſt advantage to me, by the uſe which divine wiſdom made of it. This ſtate of emptineſs, darkneſs, and impotency, went far beyond any trials I had ever yet met with. I have experienced ſince that, the prayer of the heart when it appears moſt dry and barren, nevertheleſs is not ineffectual nor offered in vain. For GOD gives what is beſt for us, though not what we moſt reliſh or wiſh for. Oh, were people but convinced of this truth; far from complaining all their life long, they would employ it only in making uſe, by a crucified faithfulneſs, and death of the ſituation GOD brings them into. Hence, by cauſing us death they would procure us life; for it is a wonderful thing, as all our happineſs, ſpiritual temporal and eternal, conſiſts in reſigning ourſelves to GOD, leaving it to him to do in us and with us as he pleaſes, and with ſo much the more ſubmiſſion, as things pleaſe us leſs; how, by this pure dependence on his ſpirit, every thing is given us admirably:

Our

Our very weakneſſes, in his hand, prove a ſource of humiliation. If the ſoul were faithful to leave itſelf in the hand of GOD, ſuſtaining all his operations, whether gratifying or mortifying, ſuffering itſelf to be conducted, from moment to moment, by his hand, and annihilated by the ſtrokes of his Providence, without complaining, or deſiring any thing beſides what it has; it would ſoon arrive at the experience of the eternal truth, though it might not know till late the ways and methods by which GOD conducted it thereto.

BUT the misfortune is, that people want to direct GOD, inſtead of reſigning themſelves to be directed by him. They want to ſhew him a way, inſtead of paſſively following that wherein he leads them. And from hence many ſouls, called to enjoy GOD himſelf, and not barely his gifts, ſpend all their lives in running after little conſolations, and feeding on them; reſting there only, and making all their happineſs to conſiſt therein.

FOR you, my dear children, if my chains and my impriſonment any way afflict you, I pray that they may ſerve to engage you to ſeek nothing but GOD for himſelf alone, and never to deſire to poſſeſs him but by the death of your whole ſelves, never to ſeek to be ſomething in the ways of the ſpirit, but chuſe ye to enter into the moſt profound nothingneſs.

I HAD an internal ſtrife, which continually racked me;—two powers which appeared equally ſtrong, ſeemed equally to ſtruggle for the maſtery within me.——On the one hand, a

deſire

desire of pleasing thee, oh my God, a fear of offending, and a continual tendency of all my powers to thee;—and on the other side, the view of all my inward corruptions, the depravity of my heart, and the continual stirring and rising of self; promptitude of spirit, and a dragging outward towards the creatures.—Oh what torrents of tears,—what desolations have these cost me?—Is it possible, I cried, that I have received so many graces and favours from God—only to lose them;—that I have loved him with so much ardour, but to be eternally deprived of Him.—That his benefits have only produced my ingratitude,—his fidelity been paid by my infidelity; that my heart has been emptied of all creatures, and created objects, and filled with his presence and love,—in order now to be wholly void of divine power, and only filled with wanderings and created objects.

I could now no longer pray as formerly. Heaven seemed shut to me, and I thought justly too. I could get no consolation, nor make any complaint thereupon; nor had I any creature on earth to apply to, or to whom I might impart my condition. I found myself banished from all beings, without finding a support or refuge in any thing. I could no more practise any virtue with facility; such as had formerly been familiar to me seemed now to have left me. "Alas! said I, is it possible that this heart, "formerly all on fire, should now become "like ice?" I often thought all creatures combined against me. Loaden with a weight of past sins, and a multitude of new ones, I could not think God would ever pardon me, but looked on myself as a victim designed for hell.

hell. I would have been glad to do penances, to make use of prayers, pilgrimages, and vows. But still whatever I tried for a remedy, seemed only to increase the malady. I may say that tears were my drink, and sorrow my food. I felt in myself such a pain as I never could bring any to comprehend, but such as have experienced it. I had within myself an executioner who tortured me without respite. Even when I went to church, I was not easy there. To sermons I could give no attention; they were now of no service or refreshment to me. I scarce conceived or understood any thing at them, or about them. Heretofore, I had endured pain with pleasure, and rejoiced at the sight of danger; but now a little of the former put me in a fret, and the shadow of the latter threw me into a fright.

"Fear not for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God"

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

AS my husband drew near his end, his distempers had no intermission. No sooner was he in appearance recovered from one but he fell into another. The gout, fever, gravel succeeded one another. He bore great pains with much patience, offering them to GOD, and making a good use of them: Yet his anger toward me increased, because reports and stories of me were multiplied to him, and those about him did nothing but vex him. He was the more susceptible of such impressions, as his pains gave him a stronger bent to vexation. At this time the maid, who had used to torment me, sometimes took pity on me. She came to me as soon as I was gone into my closet, and said, "Come to my master, that "your mother-in-law may not speak to him "any more against you." I pretended to be ignorant of it all; but he could not conceal his displeasure, nor even suffer me near him. My mother-in-law at the same time kept no bounds. All that came to the house were witnesses of the continual scoldings, which I was forced to bear, and which I bore with much patience, notwithstanding my being in the condition I have mentioned.

MY husband having, some time before his death, finished the building of the chapel in the country, where we spent a part of the summer, I had the conveniency of hearing prayers every day, and of the communion; but not daring to do it openly every day, the priest privately admitted

mitted me to the communion. They solemnized the dedication of this little chapel, and though I had already begun to enter into the condition I have described, yet when they began to bless it, I felt myself all on a sudden inwardly seized, which continued more than five hours, all the time of the ceremony, when our LORD made a new consecration of me to himself. I then seemed to myself a temple consecrated to him, both for time and for eternity; and said within myself, (speaking both of the one and the other) "May this temple never be "profaned: May the praises of my God be "sung therein for ever!" It seemed to me at that time as if my prayer was granted. But soon all this was taken from me, and not so much as any remembrance thereof left to console me.

WHEN I was at this country house, which was only a little place of retreat before the chapel was built, I retired for prayer to woods and caverns. How many times, here, has GOD preserved me from dangerous and venomous beasts! Sometimes, at unawares, I kneeled upon serpents, which were there in great plenty; and they fled away without doing me any harm. Once I happened to be alone in a little wood wherein was a mad bull. I had an antipathy for these animals, and they for me, to such a degree as to single me out among several persons, and run after me. Every one cried out for fear; but, without offering me the least hurt, he betook himself to flight. If I could recount all the providences of GOD in my favour, it would appear wonderful: They were indeed so frequent and so continual, that I could

I could not but be aſtoniſhed at them. GOD everlaſtingly gives to ſuch as have nothing wherewith to repay him. If there appears in the creature any fidelity or patience, it is he alone who gives it: If he ceaſes, for an inſtant to ſupport; if he ſeem to leave me to myſelf, I ceaſe to be ſtrong, and find myſelf weaker than any other creature. If my miſeries ſhew what I am, his favours ſhew what he is, and the extreme neceſſity I am under of ever depending on him.—But in writing I am frequently apt to wander.

As I grew big with my daughter, and was like to die, they ſpared me for ſome time; for I was ſo extremely ill that the doctors gave me over. At laſt, after having paſſed twelve years and four months in the croſſes of marriage, as great as poſſible, except poverty which I never knew, though I had much deſired it, GOD drew me out of that ſtate (after the manner I am going to relate) to give me ſtill ſtronger croſſes to bear, and of ſuch a nature as I had never met with before: For if you give attention, ſir, to the life which you have ordered me to write, you will remark that my croſſes have been increaſing till the preſent time, one being removed to give place to another to ſucceed it, ſtill heavier than the former. Amidſt the great troubles impoſed upon me, when they ſaid, "I was in a mortal ſin," I had nobody in the world to ſpeak to. I could have wiſhed to have had ſomebody for a witneſs of my conduct; but I had not any. I had no ſupport, no confeſſor, no director, no friend, no counſellor. I had loſt all: And after GOD had taken from me one after another, he withdrew

drew alſo himſelf. I remained without any creature; and to complete my diſtreſs, I ſeemed to be left without GOD himſelf, who alone could ſupport me in ſuch a deeply diſtreſſing ſtate.

As to my huſband, his illneſs grew every day more obſtinate. He apprehended the approach of death, and even wiſhed for it, ſo oppreſſive was the languiſhing life he dragged on. To his other ills was added, ſo great a diſlike to every ſort of nouriſhment, that he did not take any thing neceſſary to ſuſtain life. There was none but I that had the courage to get him to take what little he did. The doctor adviſed him to go into the country. There for a few days at firſt he ſeemed to be better, when he was ſuddenly taken with the cholic, a retention of his urine, a violent fever, and an impoſthume in his bladder. His patience encreaſed with his pain. I ſaw plainly he could not live long. It was a great trouble to me, that my mother-in-law kept me from him as much as ſhe could, and infuſed into him ſuch a diſpleaſure againſt me, that I was much afraid leſt he ſhould die in it. I took a little interval of time, when ſhe happened not to be with him, and drawing near his bed, I kneeled down and ſaid to him, "That if ever I had "done any thing that diſpleaſed him I begged "his pardon, aſſuring him it had not been vo-"luntary." He appeared very much affected, and as he was juſt come out of a ſound ſleep, he ſaid to me, "It is I who beg your pardon. I did "not deſerve you." After that time he was not only pleaſed to ſee me, but gave me advice what I ſhould do after his death, not to depend on the peo-

people on whom I now depended. He was for eight days very reſigned and patient, though, on account of the prevailing gangrene, he was cut and opend with a lance. I ſent to *Paris* for the moſt ſkilful ſurgeon: But when he arrived my huſband was dead.

No mortal could die in a more chriſtian diſpoſition, or with more courage than he did, after having received the ſacrament in a manner truly edifying. I was not preſent when he expired; for out of tenderneſs he made me retire, as he was above twenty hours without ſenſe, in the agonies of death. Thou didſt order, oh my GOD, that he ſhould die on *Magdalen*'s eve, to ſhew me that I was to be wholly thine. I renewed every year, on *Magdalen*'s day, the marriage-contract which I had made to thee my LORD: And I found myſelf at that time free to renew it, and that moſt ſolemnly. It was in the morning on the 21ſt of July, 1676, that he died. Next day I entered into my cloſet, in which was the image of my dear and divine ſpouſe the LORD JESUS CHRIST. I renewed my marriage contract, and added thereto a vow of chaſtity, with a promiſe to make it perpetual, if M. BERTOT, my director ſhould permit me to do it. After that I was ſo filled with great interior joy, which was ſo much the more new to me, as for a long time paſt I had been plunged in the deepeſt bitterneſs.

As ſoon as I heard that my huſband had juſt expired, "oh my GOD, I cryed, Thou haſt bro-" ken my bonds, and I will offer to thee a ſacri-" fice of praiſe." After that I remained in a deep ſilence, both exterior and interior, quite dry and without

without any ſupport. I could neither weep nor ſpeak. My mother-in-law ſaid very fine things, and was very much commended for it by every one. They were offended at my ſilence, which they attributed to want of reſignation. A friar told me, that every one admired the fine acts which my mother-in-law did; that as for me, they heard me ſay nothing; that I muſt ſacrifice my loſs to GOD; but I could not ſay one ſingle word, let me ſtrive as I would.

I WAS indeed very much ſpent; for tho' I was but newly delivered of my daughter, yet I attended and ſat up with my huſband four and twenty nights before his death. I was more than a year after, in recovering the fatigue, joined to my ſore weakneſs and pains both of body and of mind. The depreſſion, or dryneſs and ſtupidity which I was in, was ſuch that I could not ſay a word about GOD; it bore me down in ſuch a manner, that I could hardly ſpeak. However I entered for ſome moments into the admiration of thy goodneſs, oh my GOD, who had rendered me free, exactly on the day that I had taken thee for my ſpouſe. I ſaw well that my croſſes would not fail, ſince my mother-in-law had ſurvived my huſband. Alſo I was ſtill tied, in having two children given me in ſo ſhort a time before my huſband's death; which has evidently appeared the effect of divine wiſdom; for had I had only my eldeſt ſon left, I ſhould have put him to the college; and then have gone into the convent of the *Benedictines*, and ſo ſtolen myſelf from the deſigns of GOD upon me.

I WAS willing to ſhow the eſteem I had for my huſband, in cauſing the moſt magnificent funeral to be made for him, at my own expence, that had ever been ſeen in that country. I paid off the legacies he had left. My mother-in-law violently oppoſed every thing I could do for ſecuring my own intereſts. I had nobody to apply to for advice or help; for my brother would not give me the leaſt aſiſtance. I was ignorant of affairs: But GOD, who, independant of my natural underſtanding, had always made me fit for every thing that pleaſed him, ſupplied me with ſuch a perfect intelligence herein, that I ſucceeded. I omitted not the leaſt punctilio, and was ſurprized that in theſe matters I ſhould know without ever having learned. I digeſted all my papers, and regulated all my affairs, without the leaſt aſſiſtance from any one. My huſband had abundance of writings depoſited in his hands. I took an exact inventory of them, and ſent them ſeverally to their owners, which, without divine aſſiſtance, would have been very difficult for me; becauſe, my huſband having been a long time ſick, every thing was in the greateſt confuſion. This gained me the reputation of a ſkilful woman, as well as another affair which fell out thus.

A GREAT number of perſons, who had been at law for ſeveral years, applied to my huſband to ſettle their affairs. Tho' it was not properly the buſineſs of a gentleman, yet they applied to him, becauſe he had both underſtanding and probity; and as he had a love for ſeveral of them he conſented. There were twenty actions one upon another, and in all twenty-two perſons concerned, who could not get any end put to their

their differences, by reaſon of new incidents continually falling out. My huſband charged himſelf with getting lawyers to examine their papers, but died before he could make any procedure therein. After his death I ſent for them to give them their papers; but they would not receive them, begging of me that I would accommodate them, and prevent their ruin. It appeared to me as rediculous as impoſſible to undertake an affair of ſo great conſequence, and which would require ſo long a diſcuſſion: Nevertheleſs relying on the ſtrength and wiſdom of GOD, I followed the movement he gave me to conſent thereto. I ſhut myſelf up about thirty days in my cloſet, for all theſe affairs, without ever going out, but to maſs and meals. The arbitration being at length prepared, they all ſigned it without ſeeing it. They were all ſo well ſatisfied therewith, that they could not forbear publiſhing it every where. It was GOD alone who did thoſe things; for when I had no more to do with thoſe affairs, I knew nothing about them; and if I now hear any talk of ſuch things, to me it ſounds like Arabic.

My friends, and perſons of the greateſt diſtinction in the country, now came to adviſe me to remove from my mother-in-law: For tho' I never complained of her, every one knew her humour. I anſwered that I ſhould account it my place and duty to ſtay with her, if ſhe would permit me. The view that was given me was not to go from the croſs. Wherefore I reſolved neither to leave my mother-in-law, nor put away the girl I have ſpoken of.

I HOPE, ſir, you will excuſe me for writing in ſo little order. I cannot do otherwiſe, on account of ſo many different things I have to mention, which I can only recite as they preſent themſelves.

CHAP. XXIII.

THIS chapter is only a detail of her interior hardſhips and ſufferings during the time of total privation, as alſo great part of the 24, 25, 26, and 27th chapters, in which the like accounts often recur. The abridged account given in the 21ſt, may ſuffice on this head; yet all ſuch particulars, as appear worthy of freſh notice in theſe chapters, ſhall be recited in their proper order.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

BEING now a widow my croſſes, which one would have thought ſhould have abated, increaſed. That turbulent domeſtic I have ſo often mentioned, inſtead of growing milder, now ſhe depended on me, became more furious than ever In our houſe ſhe had amaſſed a good fortune, and I ſettled on her, beſides, an annuity for the remainder of her life, for the ſervices ſhe had done my huſband. She ſwelled with vanity and haughtineſs. Having been uſed to ſit up ſo much with an invalid, ſhe had taken to drink wine, to keep up her ſpirits. It had now paſſed into a habit. As ſhe grew aged and weak, a ſmall matter got into her head. I tried to hide this fault; but it grew to that height that it could not be concealed. I ſpoke of it to her confeſſor, in order that he might try, ſoftly and artfully, to reclaim her from it; but inſtead of profiting by her director's advice, ſhe was outrageous againſt me. My mother-in-law, who could hardly bear that fault, and had often ſpoken to me about it, now joined in reproaching me, and vindicating her. This ſtrange creature, when any company came, would cry out with all her might, "that I had diſhonoured "her, thrown her into deſpair, and would be the "cauſe of her damnation, as I was taking the "ready courſe to my own:" Yet at this time GOD gave me an unbounded patience. I anſwered only with mildneſs and charity all her paſſionate invectives, giving her beſides every poſſible mark of my affection. If any other maid came to wait on me, ſhe would draw her

back in a rage, crying out, that "I hated her "on account of the affection with which ſhe "had ſerved my huſband." When ſhe had not a mind to come, I was obliged to ſerve myſelf; and when ſhe did come, it was to chide and make a noiſe. When I was very unwell, as was often the caſe, this girl would appear to be in deſpair. From hence I thought it was from thee, oh LORD, that all this came upon me; for without thy permiſſion, ſhe was ſcarce capable of ſuch unaccountable conduct. She ſeemed not ſenſible of any faults, but always to think herſelf in the right. All thoſe whom thou haſt made uſe of to cauſe me to ſuffer, thought they were rendering ſervice to thee in ſo doing.

I WENT to PARIS on purpoſe to ſee Monſieur BERTOT, who had been of very little ſervice to me as a director. Not knowing my ſtate, and I incapable of telling him it, he grew weary of the charge. At length he threw it up, and writ to me to take another director. I made no doubt but GOD had revealed to him my wicked ſtate; and that deſertion of me ſeemed a moſt certain mark of my reprobation. This was during the life of my huſband. But now my renewed ſolicitations, and his ſympathy with me on my huſbands death, prevailed on him to reſume my direction, which to me ſtill proved of very little ſervice. I went to PARIS on purpoſe to ſee him. When there, I went twelve or fifteen times to him, without being able to tell him any thing of my condition: I told him indeed I wanted ſome eccleſiaſtic to educate my ſon, to rid him of his bad habits, and of the wrong impreſſions he had conceived againſt me. He found one for me,

me, of whom he had received very good recommendations.

I WENT to make a *retreat with M. BERTOT, and Mad. de C. He ſpoke to me all the time not a quarter of an hour at moſt. As he ſaw that I ſaid nothing to him, for indeed I knew not what to ſay, as I had not ſpoke to him of the favours which the LORD had conferred on me; (not from a deſire to conceal them, but becauſe the LORD did not permit me to do it, as he had over me only the deſigns of death) he therefore ſpoke to ſuch as he looked upon to be more advanced in grace, and let me alone as one for whom there was nothing to be done. So well did GOD hide from him the ſituation of my ſoul, in order to make me ſuffer, that he wanted to refer me to certain conſiderations, thinking I had not the ſpirit of prayer, and that Mrs. GRANGER was miſtaken in me when ſhe told him I had. I did what I could to obey him, but to me it was entirely impoſſible. On this account I was diſpleaſed with myſelf, becauſe I believed M. BERTOT rather than my own experience. Through this whole retreat my inclination, which I diſcerned only by the reſiſtance I made to it, was to reſt in ſilence and nakedneſs of thought; but in the ſettling of my mind therein I feared I was diſobeying the orders of my director: And this made me think that I was decayed and fallen off from grace. I kept myſelf in my ſtate

* Many of the pious romaniſts retire a day, a week, or a month on ſome fixed ſeaſon—ſecluding themſelves intirely from all worldly buſineſs and connections, in order to give up their whole time and heart to GOD in prayer, and this they call a retreat.

of nothingneſs, content with my poor low degree of prayer, without envying the higher one of others, which I judged myſelf unworthy of. I would have however deſired much to do the will of GOD, and to advance more to pleaſe him, but deſpaired altogether of ever attaining that deſirable end.

THERE was, in the place where I lived, one whoſe doctrine was ſuſpected *; he poſſeſſed a dignity in the church, which obliged me to have a deference for him. As he preſently underſtood how averſe I was to all who were ſuſpected of unſoundneſs in the faith, and ſuppoſed that I had ſome credit in that place, he uſed his utmoſt efforts to engage me in his ſentiments. I anſwered him with ſo much clearneſs and energy, that he had not a word to reply. This increaſed his deſire to win me over, and in order to it to contract a friendſhip with me. He continued to importune me two years and a half. As he was very polite, of an obliging temper, and had a good ſhare of wit, I did not miſtruſt him, but even conceived a hope of his converſion, in which I found myſelf miſtaken. I then ceaſed going near him. He came to enquire why he could ſee me no more. At that time he was ſo agreeable to my ſick huſband, in his aſſiduities about him, that I could not avoid his converſation; though I thought the ſhorteſt and beſt way for me would be to break off all acquaintance with him, which I did after the death of my huſband, for M. BERTOT would not permit me to do it before: Therefore, when he now ſaw that he could

* Moſt probably of JANSENISM.

could not renew it, he raiſed up ſtrong perſecutions againſt me, and ſtirred up thoſe of his party.

THESE gentlemen had at that time a method amongſt them, by which they ſoon knew who were of their party, and who were oppoſite. They ſent to one another circular letters, by means of which, in a very little time, they cried me down on every ſide, after a very ſtrange manner. Yet this gave me little trouble. I was glad of my new liberty, intending never again to enter into an intimacy with any one, which would give me ſo much difficulty to break off.

THE inability I was now in, of doing thoſe exterior acts of charity I had done before, ſerved this perſon with a pretext to publiſh that it was owing to him I had formerly done them; and that, having broke off from him, I now quitted them. Willing to aſcribe to himſelf the merit of what GOD alone, by his grace, had made me do, he went ſo far as to preach of me publickly, as one who had been a bright pattern to the town, but was now become a ſcandal to it. Several times he preached very offenſive things. And though I was preſent at thoſe ſermons, and they were enough to weigh me down with confuſion, for they offended all that heard them; I could not be troubled at it, for I carried in myſelf my own condemnation beyond utterance. I thought I merited abundantly worſe than all he could ſay of me, and that, if all men knew me, they would trample me under their feet. My reputation then was blaſted by the induſtry of this eccleſiaſtic:

He

He cauſed all ſuch as paſſed for perſons of piety to declare againſt me. I thought he and they were in the right, and therefore quietly bore it all. Confuſed like a criminal that dares not lift up his eyes, I looked upon the virtue of others with reſpect. I ſaw no fault in others, and no virtue in myſelf. When any happened to praiſe me it was like a heavy blow ſtruck at me, and I ſaid in myſelf, "They little know my miſeries, and "from what ſtate I have fallen." When any blamed me, I agreed to it, as right and juſt. Nature wanted ſometimes to get out of ſuch an abject condition, but could not find any way: And if I tried to make an outward appearance of righteouſneſs, by the practice of ſome good thing, my heart in ſecret rebuked me as guilty of hypocriſy, in wanting to appear what I was not; and GOD did not permit that to ſucceed. Oh, how excellent are the croſſes of Providence! All other croſſes are of no value.

I WAS often very ill, and in danger of death, and knew not what to do to prepare myſelf for it. Several perſons of piety, who had been acquainted with me, writ to me about thoſe things which the gentleman (above hinted at) ſpread about me, and I did not offer to juſtify myſelf, though I knew myſelf innocent of the things whereof they accuſed me. One day being in the greateſt deſolation and diſtreſs, I opened the New Teſtament, and chanced to meet with theſe words, "My grace is ſufficient for thee, for my "ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs:" Which for a little time gave me ſome relief.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

MY GOD took from me all the ſenſibility which I had for the creatures, or things created, even in an inſtant, as one takes off a robe, in ſuch ſort that after that time I had none for any whatſoever. Though he had done me that favour for which I can never be ſufficiently grateful; I was however neither more contented nor leſs confuſed by it. My GOD ſeemed to be ſo eſtranged, and diſpleaſed with me, that there remained nothing but the grief of having loſt his bleſſed preſence through my fault. The loſs of my reputation every day increaſing, (by means of that gentleman's party whom I have mentioned,) became more ſenſible to my heart, though I was not allowed to juſtify or bewail myſelf.

As I became always more impotent for every kind of exterior works, as I could not go to ſee the poor, nor ſtay at church, nor practice prayer, and as I became colder towards GOD, in proportion as I was more ſenſible of my wrong ſteps, all this deſtroyed me the more both in my own eyes and in thoſe of others. There were in the mean time ſome very conſiderable gentlemen who made propoſals for me, and even ſuch perſons as according to the rules of faſhion ought not to think of me. They preſented themſelves, during the very depth of my outward and inward deſolation. At firſt it appeared to me a means of drawing me out of the vexation I was in. But it ſeemed to me then, notwithſtanding my pains of body and mind, that if a King had preſented himſelf to me, I ſhould have refuſed him with pleaſure, to ſhew

thee

thee, oh my GOD, that with all my miſeries I was reſolved to be thine alone; and that if thou wouldſt not accept of me, I ſhould at leaſt have the conſolation of having been faithful to thee, to the utmoſt of my power. For as to my inward ſtate I never mentioned it to any body: I never ſpoke thereof, nor of the ſuitors, though my mother-in-law would ſay, "If I did not marry, it was be-"cauſe none would have me." It was ſufficient for me that thou, oh my GOD, kneweſt that I ſacrificed them to thee, (without ſaying a word to any body) eſpecially one whoſe high birth and amiable exterior qualities might have tempted both my vanity and inclination. Oh could I but have hoped, through thoſe ſacrifices and heavy afflictions to become agreeable to thee, ſuch a hope would have been like a change from hell to heaven. But ſo far was I from preſuming to hope for it, that I feared this ſea of affliction might alſo be followed by everlaſting miſery, in the loſs of thee. I durſt not deſire to enjoy thee, I only deſired not to offend thee.

I WAS for five or ſix weeks at the laſt extremity. I could not take any nouriſhment. A ſpoonful of broth made me faint. My voice was ſo gone that when they put their ears cloſe to my mouth, they could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh my words. I threw up to the very chyle of my ſtomach. I could ſee no hopes of ſalvation, yet could not be unwilling to die, as I bore a ſtrong impreſſion that the longer I ſhould live the more I ſhould ſin. Of the two I thought I rather choſe hell than ſin. All the good, which GOD made me do, now ſeemed to me evil, or full of faults. All my prayers, penances, alms and charities, ſeemed to riſe up againſt me, and heighten my condemnation. I thought

thought there appeared on the ſide of GOD, on my own, and from all creatures, one general condemnation, my conſcience was a witneſs againſt me, which I could not appeaſe; yet what may appear ſtrange, the ſins of my youth did not then give me any pain at all. They did not riſe up in judgment againſt me, but there appeared one univerſal teſtimony againſt all the good I had done, and all the ſentiments of evil I had entertained. If I went to confeſſors, I could tell them nothing of my condition, and if I could have told them, they could not have underſtood it. They would have regarded as eminent virtues, what, oh my GOD, thy eyes all pure and chaſte rejected as infidelity. It was then that I felt the truth of what thou haſt ſaid, that *thou judgeſt our righteouſneſs*. Oh how pure art thou! Who can comprehend it? It was then that I turned my eyes on every ſide, to ſee what way ſuccour might come to me; but my ſuccour could come no way but from him who made heaven and earth. As I ſaw there was no ſafety for me, or ſpiritual health in myſelf, I entered into a ſecret complacency in ſeeing no good in myſelf whereon to reſt, or preſume for ſalvation. The nearer my deſtruction appeared, the more I found in GOD himſelf, wherewith to augment my truſt and confidence, notwithſtanding he ſeemed ſo juſtly irritated againſt me. It ſeemed to me that I had in JESUS CHRIST all that was wanting in myſelf. Oh, Holy JESUS! I was *that loſt ſheep of the Houſe of Iſrael, whom thou waſt come to ſave*: Thou waſt come to ſave her who could find no ſalvation out of thee. Oh ye ſtout and righteous men! Obſerve as much as ye pleaſe of excellence in what ye have done to the glory of GOD. As for me, I only glory in my infirmities,

mities, ſince they have merited for me ſuch a SAVIOUR!

ALL my troubles, joined to the loſs of my reputation, which yet was not ſo great as I apprehended, (it being only amongſt a party) rendered me ſo unable to eat, that it ſeemed wonderful how I lived. In four days I did not eat as much as would make one very moderate repaſt. I was obliged to keep my bed, through meer weakneſs, my body being no longer able to ſupport the burden laid upon it. If I had thought, known, or heard tell, that there had ever been ſuch a ſtate as mine, it would have exceedingly relieved me: But my very pain appeared to me to be ſin. Spiritual books, when I tried to read them, all contributed only to augment it; for I ſaw in myſelf none of thoſe degrees which they ſet down. I did not ſo much as comprehend them. And when they treated of the pains of certain ſtates, I was very far from attributing any of them to myſelf. I ſaid to myſelf, "Theſe "perſons feel the pains of divine operations; but as to me, I ſin, and feel nothing but my "own wicked ſtate." I could have wiſhed to ſeparate the ſin from the confuſion of ſin, and provided I had not offended GOD, all would have been eaſy to me.

SEE here a ſlight ſketch of my laſt miſeries, which I am glad to let you know, becauſe in their beginning I omitted many infidelities, having had too much of an earneſt attachment, vain complaiſance, unprofitable and tedious converſations, tho' ſelf-love and nature made a ſort of neceſſity for them; but toward the latter

ter part I could not have born a ſpeech too human, nor the leaſt thing of the kind. GOD by an apparent evil purified me from the real evil. Might not I then well ſing with the church, "O happy ſin, which has obtained ſuch a Redeemer for me!"

CHAP. XXVI.

THE firſt religious perſon that GOD made uſe of to draw me to himſelf, to whom (according to his deſire) I writ from time to time, wrote to me in the depth of my diſtreſs, deſiring me to write to him no more, ſignifying his diſapprobation of what came from me, and that I diſpleaſed GOD greatly. A father, a Jeſuit, who had eſteemed me much, wrote to me in like manner. No doubt, it was by thy permiſſion, they thus contributed to compleat my deſolation. I thanked them for their charity, and commended myſelf to their prayers. It was then ſo indifferent to me to be decried of every body, even of the greateſt ſaints, that it added but little to my pain. The pain of diſpleaſing GOD, and the ſtrong propenſity I felt in myſelf to all ſorts of faults, cauſed ſtill my moſt lively and ſenſible pain.

I had been accuſtomed from the beginning to dryneſs and to privation *. I even preferred

* For thoſe unacquainted with the Lives and Writings of ſuch deeply interior perſons as Lady GUION, it may be particularly neceſſary, to throw in a few obſervations on this paſſage. She here treats of that ſevere purification,

ed it to the ſtate of abounding, becauſe I knew that I muſt ſeek GOD above all. I had even, at

rification, which precedes the total renewal of the ſoul in GOD,—its reſtoration to *all* it had loſt in Adam; a ſtate which the old Puritans called *tranſformatian*, which the Myſtics commonly call, *the unitive ſtate*, which ſome at preſent, term, *the ſtate of ſanctification*, and which, in the Scriptures is alſo explained by different appellations, and ſtrongly expreſſed by St. PAUL—*The fullneſs of the ſtature of the new man in* CHRIST JESUS. The whole ſpiritual proceſs, including this ſtate of purification, is comprehended in the following extract from a late celebrated writer. "At firſt," ſays he, "divine "grace acts upon us differently, by motives of ſelf-"intereſt, and attracts by celeſtial delectation, or in-"ward remorſes. It diſcovers to us by turns, the "beauty of virtue, or the deformity of vice, the puniſh-"ments that attend crimes, and the pure delights that "are to be enjoyed in a future immortality. Fear and "hope act in us alternately. Sometimes the ſoul is "filled with a ſacred horror for its preſent ſtate, a bit-"ter anguiſh for its infidelities, and a true deſire of "ſatisfying divine juſtice. At other times, truth ſhows "itſelf to the mind with all its charms, draws it with "ſoft ſmiles and endearing careſſes, enchants us with "noble ideas, and celeſtial ſenſations. Then we attach "ourſelves to the love of virtue, by the ſweetneſs that "accompanies it, from a view of the recompence that "attends it; and by the natural invincible love of "happineſs. Grace makes uſe of our natural diſpo-"ſitions and faculties, to convert the ſoul to its ſuper-"natural object as beatifying. It is thus that we re-"nounce all the deluſions of ſenſe, gather in our ſcat-"tered powers that were diſperſed upon things without "us, and retire into our ſpiritual natures, there to ſtu-"dy our own hearts, and be acquainted with ourſelves. "This is true converſion, and the beginning of wiſ-"dom."

"After this, grace proceeds to another operation, "leſs delectable, but more purifying. It is then we "diſcover

at the firſt beginnings, an inſtinct of the inner-moſt of my ſoul to paſs over every manner of thing

"diſcover by degrees, all the labyrinths and windings "of the heart, all the refined paſſions of ſelf-love, its "uſurpations upon the rights of the Deity, its idolatrous "complacency in its own virtues, and the ſecret pride "by which it referred them all to itſelf. To humble "and cure it of this ſpiritual ſelf-attribution, by which "the devil's fell, croſſes from within and from without "beſiege it, temptations of all kind moleſt it; the ima-"gination ſeems unhinged; the paſſions, which it "thought extinguiſhed, return upon it with more vio-"lence than ever; all the ſources of ſpiritual conſolation "are dried up. It can rejoice no more in its ſublime "ideas, noble ſentiments, and ſhining virtues. Like "gold purified in the fire, the central operations of di-"vine juſtice and love, throws up from the bottom of "the ſoul to the ſurface, all its natural impurity, droſs "and corruption: All its faculties ſeem darkened and "depraved; it feels for a long time its natural impo-"tence, immenſe void, and abſolute nothingneſs, and "the horrible ſolitude of a ſoul exiled from the divine "preſence, that can neither take pleaſure in the crea-"tures, nor in itſelf.

"In fine, if the ſoul continues faithful in a total ab-"negation of all outward and inward pleaſure; of all "ſpiritual and terreſtrial concupiſance, of all corporal "and ſelfiſh delectation, it dies to its natural life, it "is evacuated of ſelf, elevated above ſelf, diſengaged "from ſelf, becomes truly regenerated, and breathes "a new life hid with CHRIST in GOD, who inveſts "it, dwells in it, and becomes its life, light and love. "It is then that it enters into the HOLY OF HOLIES, "that it becomes a living temple of the moſt High, "partakes of the royal prieſthood and offers up a perpetual "holocauſt of praiſe, love, and adoration, while it prac-"tiſes externally all the virtues and duties of its ſta-"tion. The firſt of theſe three operations detaches "us from terreſtrial objects: the ſecond diſengages us

thing whatſoever, and to leave the gifts to run after the giver. But at this time my ſpirit and ſenſes were in ſuch a manner ſtruck, by thy permiſſion, oh my GOD, who waſt pleaſed to deſtroy me without mercy, that the farther I went, the more every thing appeared to me a ſin; even croſſes appeared to me no more croſſes but real faults. I thought I drew them all on myſelf by

" from falſe *ſelf-love*: the third transforms us into the " divine image."

Now the worſt conſequences may ariſe from our miſtaking the degree of our ſpiritual advancement, and which alas too frequently happens: for the heart of man deceitful above all things, and prone to ſeize on every ſhadow for its own vindication, is ready to comfort and flatter itſelf, on every return of coldneſs and apathy to divine matters, that ſuch a ſtate is ſimilar to that which our author mentions in this chapter. But beware, O reader, let not thy cold and barren ſoul, take refuge under the plauſible ſuppoſition of inevitable dryneſs and aridities. For if thou yet harboureſt one vice, one darling ſecret ſin, or indulgeſt one carnal appetite, paſſion or temper; if thou cleaveſt to the world, heapeſt up riches, or ſeekeſt after honour or applauſe, if thou haſt not like her, trampled upon, and abandoned all, and perſevered for a length of time, wholly a ſtretch for the kingdom and glory of GOD, until a living and intimate ſenſe of his divine preſence abide in thee. I ſay, if thou haſt not experienced all this, and yet find thy heart in a cold lifeleſs ſtate of dry ſterility, attempt not to compare it, nor flatter thyſelf that it is at all ſimilar to that ſtate of radical purification, which our author deſcribes in this chapter.

WITH regard to thoſe drineſſes and diſtractions, to which the generality of Chriſtians are ſubject, and which ariſe from infidelity, unwatchfulneſs and ſin, the reader is referred to the author's treatiſe on prayer, which is ſubjoined to this work.

by my imprudent words and actions. I was like thoſe, who, looking through a coloured glaſs, behold every thing with the ſame dye with which it is ſtained. Had I been able to do any exterior actions as formerly, or penances for my evil, it would have relieved me; but, I was forbidden to do the latter, beſide, I grew ſo timorous, and felt in myſelf ſucha weakneſs, as made it appear impoſſible for me to do them; I looked on them with horror, I found myſelf now ſo weak and incapable of any thing of the kind.

METHINKS I omit many things, both of providences of GOD in my favour, and of rugged paths through which I was obliged to paſs: But as I have only one general view, I leave them in the knowledge of GOD only. Afterwards, being forſaken of my director, the coldneſs towards me which I remarked in the perſons conducted by him, gave me no more trouble, nor indeed the eſtrangement of all the creatures, on account of my inward humiliation. My brother alſo joined with thoſe who exclaimed againſt me, even tho' he had never ſeen them before. I believe itwas GOD who conducted things this way, for my brother has worth, and undoubtedly thought he did well in acting thus.

I WAS obliged to go about ſome buſineſs to a town where ſome near relations of my mother-in-law lived. How did I find things changed here! When I was there before, they entertained me in a moſt elegant and obliging manner, regaling me from houſe to houſe with emulation: But now they treated me with the utmoſt contempt, ſaying, they did it to revenge

what I made their relation ſuffer. As I ſaw the thing went ſo far, and that notwithſtanding all my care and endeavours to pleaſe her, I had not been able to ſucceed, I reſolved to come to an explanation with her. I told her, "that "there was a current report that I treated "her ill, tho' I made it my ſtudy to give her "every mark of my eſteem. If the report was "true, I deſired her to allow me to remove "from her; for that I would not chuſe to ſtay "to give her pain, but only with a quite contrary "view." She anſwered very coldly, "I might "do what I would; for ſhe had not ſpoken a-"bout it, but was reſolved to live apart from "me." This was fairly giving me my diſcharge, and I thought of taking my meaſures privately to retire. As I had not, ſince my widowhood, made any viſits but ſuch as were of pure neceſſity, or charity, there were found too many diſcontented ſpirits, who made a party with her againſt me; while GOD required of me an inviolable ſecrecy of all my pains, both exterior and interior. There is nothing which makes nature die ſo much, as to find neither ſupport nor conſolation. In ſhort I ſaw myſelf obliged to go out, in the middle of winter, with my children and my daughter's nurſe. At that time there was no houſe empty in the town. The *Benedictines* offered me an apartment in theirs.

I WAS now in a great ſtraight; on one ſide fearing leaſt I was ſhunning the croſs, on the other ſide thinking it unreaſonable to impoſe my ſtay on one to whom it was only painful. Beſides what I have related of his carriage, which ſtill continued, when I went into the country to take a little repoſe, ſhe complained that I left her

her alone. If I deſired her to come thither ſhe would not. If I ſaid, "I durſt not aſk her to "come, for fear of incommoding her, by chang-"ing her bed," She replied, "It was only an "excuſe, becauſe I would not have her go; "and that I only went to be away from her." When I heard that ſhe was diſpleaſed at my being in the country, I returned to the town. Then ſhe could not bear to ſpeak to me, or to ſee me. I accoſted her without making as if I ſaw how ſhe carried it; but inſtead of making me any anſwer, ſhe turned her head another way. I often ſent her my coach, deſiring her to come and ſpend a day in the country. She ſent it back empty, without any anſwer. If I paſſed ſome days there without ſending it, ſhe complained aloud. In ſhort, all I did to pleaſe her ſoured her, GOD ſo permitting it; for ſhe had in the main a good heart, but was troubled with an uneaſy temper: And I do not fail to think myſelf under much obligation to her.

BEING with her on *Chriſtmas* day, I ſaid to her with much affection. "My mother, on this day "was the King of *peace* born, to bring it to us. "I beg *peace* of you in his name." I think that touched her, tho' ſhe would not let it appear. The Eccleſiaſtic, whom I had with me at home, far from ſtrengthening and comforting me, did nothing but weaken and afflict me, telling me that I ought not to ſuffer certain things. I had not credit enough to diſcharge any domeſtic, however defective or culpable. As ſoon as any of them were warned to go away, ſhe ſided with them, and all her friends interfered in it. As I was ready to go off, one of my mother-in-law's friends, a man of worth, who had always an eſ-

teem for me, without daring to ſhew it, having heard it, was much afraid leſt I ſhould leave the town; for the removal of my alms, he thought, would be a loſs to the country. He reſolved to ſpeak to my mother-in-law, in the ſofteſt manner he could; for he knew her. After he had ſpoken to her, ſhe ſaid, "She would not put me "away, but if I would go ſhe would not hinder "me." After this he came to ſee me, and deſired me to go and make an excuſe to her, in order to content her. I told him, I ſhould be willing to make a hundred, tho' "I did not know "about what; that I did it continually about "every thing, which made her uneaſy. But "that was not now the matter, for I made no "complaint of her, but thought it not proper "for me to continue with her, to give her pain; "that it was but juſt that I ſhould contribute to "her eaſe." However he went with me into her room. Then I told her "That I begged her "pardon, if ever I had diſpleaſed her in any "thing, that it had never been my intention to "do it; that I deſired her, before this gentle-"man, who was her friend, to tell me wherein "I had given her any offence." Here God permitted, that ſhe made a declaration of the truth in his preſence. She ſaid, "She was not a "perſon to ſuffer herſelf to be offended; that "ſhe had no other complaint againſt me but that "I did not love her, and that I wiſhed her dead." I anſwered her, "That theſe thoughts were far "from my heart, ſo far from it, that I ſhould "be glad, by my beſt care and attendance on "her, to prolong her days; that my affection "was real, but that ſhe never would be perſuaded "to

"to believe it, whatever teſtimonies I could "give, ſo long as ſhe hearkened to people who "ſpoke to her againſt me; that ſhe had with "her a maid, who, far from ſhewing me any "reſpect, treated me ill, ſo far as to puſh me "when ſhe wanted to paſs by: She had done it "at church; making me give way to her with "as much violence as contempt, ſeveral times "alſo in my chamber grating me with her "words; that I had never complained of it; "becauſe ſuch a temper might one day give her "trouble." She took the girl's part: Nevertheleſs we embraced one another, and it was left ſo. Soon after, when I was in the country, this maid, having me no more to vent her chagrins on, behaved in ſuch a manner to my mother-in-law as ſhe could not bear. She immediately upon it, put her out of doors. I muſt ſay here on my mother-in-law's behalf, that ſhe had both ſenſe and virtue, and except certain faults, which perſons who do not practiſe prayer are liable to, ſhe had good qualities. Perhaps I cauſed croſſes to her without intending it, and ſhe to me without knowing it. I hope what I write will not be ſeen by any who may be offended with it, or who may not be in a condition of ſeeing theſe matters in God.

That gentleman who had uſed me ſo ill, for breaking off my acquaintance with him, among his penitents had one who, for affairs which befell her huſband, was obliged to quit the country. He himſelf was accuſed of the ſame things of which he had ſo liberally and unjuſtly accuſed me, and even of things much worſe, and with more noiſe and outcry. Tho' I well knew all this, God granted me the favour never to make his

downfall the ſubject of my diſcourſe; never to open my lips about it. On the contrary, when any ſpoke to me of it, I pitied him, and ſaid what I could in mitigation of his caſe. And GOD governed my heart ſo well, that it never offered to go into any vain joy at ſeeing him overtaken, and oppreſt, with thoſe kind of evils which he had been ſo aſſiduous in endeavouring to bring upon me. And though I knew that my mother-in-law was informed of it all, I never ſpoke to her about it, or about the ſad confuſions he had cauſed in a certain family. I did not lay hold on the opportunity to mention any thing of the wrong he had done me. I only anſwered her in a few words without blaming him; as GOD required of me ſuch a ſilence about my croſſes, for more than ſixteen years, that my lips ſeemed ſealed in every thing that regarded them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

ONE day during my huſband's life time, loaden with ſorrow, and not knowing what to do, I wiſhed to ſpeak to a perſon of diſtinction and merit, who came often into the country, and paſſed for one deeply interior. I wrote to requeſt an opportunity with him, for that I wanted his inſtruction and advice: But ſoon after I felt remorſe for it: And this voice ſprung in my heart, "What,—doſt thou ſeek for eaſe, and to ſhake "off my yoke?" Hereupon I inſtantly ſent a note again to deſire him to excuſe me, adding, "That "what I had wrote was only from *ſelf-love*; and "not neceſſity; that as he knew what it was to "be faithful to GOD, I hoped he would not diſ-"approve my acting with this chriſtian ſimpli-"city:" Yet he reſented it, which ſurprized me much, as I had conceived a high idea of his virtue. Virtues he has, but ſuch as are full of the life and activities of nature, and unacquainted with the paths of mortification and death. Thou oh my GOD haſt been my conductor even in theſe paths, as with admiration I have diſcovered ſince they are paſt. Bleſſed be thy Name for ever. I am obliged to bear this teſtimony to thy goodneſs.

BEFORE I continue my narration, I muſt add one remark, which the LORD gave me to make upon the way by which he, in his goodneſs, was pleaſed to conduct me; which is, that this obſcure path is the ſureſt to mortify the ſoul, as it leaves it not any prop to lean upon for ſupport. Though it has no application to any particular ſtate of JESUS CHRIST; yet, at its coming out, it finds itſelf clothed with all his diſpoſitions and divine

divine ſtates, having truly put on CHRIST. The impure and ſelfiſh ſoul, is hereby purified, as gold in the furnace. Full of its own judgment, and its own will before, but now obeys like a child, and finds no other will in itſelf. Before, it would have conteſted for a triſle: Now it yields at firſt, not with reluctance and pain, by way of practiſing virtue, but as it were naturally. Its own vices are vaniſhed. This creature ſo vain before now loves nothing but poverty, littleneſs and humiliation. It preferred itſelf above every body, now every body above itſelf, having a boundleſs charity for its neighbour, to bear with his faults and weakneſſes, in order to win him by love, which before it could not do but with very great conſtraint. The rage of the wolf is changed to the meekneſs of the lamb.

DURING all the time of my experiencing my miſeries and my deep trials, I went after no fine ſights or recreations. When others went, I ſtayed at home. I wanted to ſee and know nothing but JESUS CHRIST. My cloſet was my only diverſion. Even when the queen was near me, whom I had never ſeen, and whom I had deſire enough to ſee; I had only to open my eyes, and look out, to ſee her; yet did not do it. I had been fond of hearing others ſing: And yet I was once four days with one who paſſed for the fineſt voice in the world, without ever deſiring her to ſing; which ſurprized her, becauſe ſhe was not ignorant that, knowing her name, I muſt know the charming excellence of her voice. However, I committed ſome infidelities, in enquiring what others ſaid of me by way of blame. I met with one who told me every thing. And though I ſhewed nothing of it, it ſerved only to mortify me,

me, as I ſaw I was yet too much alive to ſelf, and that *ſelf-love* and nature had put me upon this enquiry,

I SHOULD never be able to expreſs the number of my miſeries; but they are ſo vaſtly ſurmounted by the favours of GOD, and ſo ſwallowed up in theſe that I can ſee them no more. One of the things which gave me moſt pain in the ſeven years I have ſpoken of, eſpecially the five laſt, was ſo ſtrange a folly of my imagination that it gave me no reſt. My ſenſes bore it company in ſuch ſort that I could no more ſhut my eyes at church: And thus having all the gates and avenues open, I was like a vineyard expoſed, becauſe the hedges which the father of the family had planted were torn away. I ſaw then every one that came and went, and every thing that paſſed in the church. For the ſame force, which had drawn me inward to recollection, ſeemed to puſh me outward to diſſipation.

LOADEN with miſeries of all ſorts, weighed down with oppreſſions, and cruſhed under continual croſſes, I thought of nothing elſe but ending my days thus. There remained in me not the leaſt hope of ever emerging out of ſo diſtreſſing a ſtate: But notwithſtanding I thought I had loſt grace for ever, and the ſalvation which it merits for us, I longed at leaſt to do what I could for GOD, tho' I feared I ſhould never love him; and ſeeing the happy ſtate from whence I had fallen, I wiſhed in gratitude to ſerve him, though I looked on myſelf as a victim doomed to deſtruction. Sometimes the view of that happy period cauſed ſecret deſires to ſpring up in my heart,

heart, of recovering it again; but I was inſtantly rejected and thrown back into the depth of the abyſs, from whence I could ſcarcely utter a ſigh; I judged myſelf to be in a ſtate which was due to unfaithful ſouls. I ſeemed, oh my GOD, as if I was for ever caſt off from thy regard, and from that of all creatures. By degrees my ſtate ceaſed to be painful. I became even inſenſible to it, and my inſenſibility ſeemed like the final hardening of my reprobation. My coldneſs appeared to me a mortal coldneſs. And it was truly ſo, oh my GOD, ſince I thus died to ſelf, in order to live wholly in thee, and in thy precious love, as I am going to relate.

To reſume then my hiſtory, a ſervant of mine wanted to become a BARNABITE. I wrote about it to Father DE LA MOTHE; he anſwered me, that I muſt addreſs Father LA COMBE, who was then the ſuperior of the BARNABITES of TONON. That obliged me to write to him. I had always preſerved ſecret reſpect and eſteem for him, as one under grace. I was glad of this opportunity of recommending myſelf to his prayers. I wrote to him about my fall from the grace of GOD, and that I had requited his favours with the blackeſt ingratitude; that I was miſerable, and a ſubject worthy of compaſſion; and that, far from having advanced towards GOD, I was become entirely alienated from him. He anſwered me in ſuch a manner, as if he had known, by a ſupernatural light, notwithſtanding the frightful deſcription I had given of myſelf, that my condition was of grace. But I could not then believe it.

IN

IN the midſt of my miſeries * GENEVA came into my mind, in a ſingular manner, which cauſed me many fears. "What, ſaid I, to compleat "my reprobation, ſhall I go to ſuch an exceſs "of impiety, as to quit the faith through apoſ"taſy? (The inhabitants of GENEVA being ge"nerally Proteſtants or Calviniſts.) Am I then "about quitting that church, for which I would "give a thouſand lives? Or, ſhall I ever depart "from that faith which I would even wiſh to "ſeal with my blood?" I had ſuch a diſtruſt of myſelf, that I durſt hope for nothing, but had a thouſand reaſons for fear, after the experience I had of my weakneſs. Nevertheleſs the letter, which I had received from Father LA COMBE, in which he wrote me an account of his preſent diſpoſition, ſomewhat ſimilar to mine, had ſuch an effect, as to reſtore peace and calmneſs to my mind. I felt myſelf inwardly united to him, as to a perſon of great fidelity to the grace of GOD. Afterwards a woman appeared to me in a dream to be come down from Heaven, to tell me that GOD demanded me at GENEVA.

ABOUT eight or ten days before MAGDALEN's day, 1680, it came into my mind to write to father LA COMBE, and to requeſt him, if he received my letter before that day, to pray par-

* GENEVA, a city of Savoy, and capital of the territory of Geneva; it is ſituated near the confines of France and Switzerland on the river Rhone, at the weſt end of the famous lake of Geneva, and is the great reſort of the Calviniſts from France, and other nations for education, it having been the place of Calvin's reſidence, and his diſciples having had the dominion of that city ever ſince.

ticularly

ticularly for me. And it was ſo ordered, contrary even to my expectations, that he received my letter on St. MAGDALEN's eve, and when praying for me the next day, it was ſaid to him, thrice over, with much power, " Ye ſhall both dwell in one " and the ſame place." he was very much ſurprized, as he never had received interior words before. I believe, oh my GOD, that that has been much more verified, both in our inward ſenſe and experience, and in the ſame crucifying adventures which have befallen us, pretty much alike; and in thy ſelf, who art our dwelling, than in any temporal abode: For, though I have been for ſome time in the ſame country with him, and thy Providence has furniſhed us with ſome opportunities of being together, yet it appears to me, that it is much more verified in the former, as we both have had the like experience of JESUS CHRIST crucified.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ON that happy *Magdalen*'s day, my ſoul was perfectly delivered from all it's pains. It had already begun ſince the receipt of the firſt letter from Father LA COMBE, to recover a new life: It was then indeed only like that of a dead perſon raiſed, tho' not yet unbound from his grave-clothes: But on this day I was, as it were, in perfect life, and ſet wholly at liberty. I then found myſelf as much raiſed above nature, as before I had been depreſſed under its burden. I was inexpreſſibly overjoyed to find him, whom I thought I had loſt for ever, returned to me again with unſpeakable magnificence and purity. It was then, oh my GOD, that I found again in thee with new advantages, in an ineffable manner, all I had been deprived of: And the peace I now poſſeſſed was all holy, heavenly and inexpreſſible; all I had enjoyed before was only a peace, the gift of GOD, but now I received and poſſeſſed the GOD OF PEACE; yet the remembrance of my paſt miſery, ſtill brought a fear upon me, leſt nature ſhould find means to take to itſelf any part therein. As ſoon as it wanted to ſee or taſte any thing, the ſpirit ever watchful croſſed and repelled it. I was far from elevating myſelf then, or atributing to myſelf any thing of this new ſtate: For my experience made me ſenſible what I was.

I HOPED I ſhould enjoy this happy ſtate for ſome time, but little did I think my happineſs ſo great and immutable as it was. If one may judge of a good by the trouble which precedes it, I leave mine to be judged of, by the ſorrows I had

I had undergone before my attaining to it. The Apoſtle PAUL tells us, that "the ſufferings of "this life are not to be compared with the glory "that is prepared for us." How true is that even of this life? One day of this happineſs was worth more than years of ſuffering. It was indeed at that time well worth all I had undergone, though it was then only dawning, an alacrity for doing good was reſtored to me, greater than ever. It ſeemed to be all quiet, free and natural to me. At the beginning this liberty was leſs extenſive; but as I advanced it grew ſtill greater. I had occaſion to ſee Mon. BERTOT for a few moments, and juſt told him, I thought my ſtate much changed, having ſcarce time to tell him any more. He ſeeming attentive to ſomething elſe anſwered, "No." I believed him; for grace taught me to prefer the judgment of others, and rather believe them than my own opinions or experience. This did not give me any kind of trouble; for every ſtate ſeemed equally indifferent ſo I had the favour of GOD. I felt a kind of beatitude, every day increaſing in me. I did all ſorts of good, without ſelfiſhneſs, or premeditation. Whenever a ſelf reflective thought was preſented to my mind, it was inſtantly rejected, and as it were a curtain in the ſoul drawn before it. My imagination was kept ſo fixed, that I had now very little trouble on that head. I wondered at the clearneſs of my mind and purity of my whole heart.

I RECEIVED a letter from Father LA COMBE, wherein he wrote that GOD had diſcovered to him that he had great deſigns in regard to me, "Let "them be, *then ſaid I to myſelf*, either of juſ"tice or mercy, all is equal to me." I ſtill had *Geneva*

Geneva deeply at heart; but ſaid nothing of it to any body, waiting for GOD to make known to me his all-powerful will, and fearing leſt any ſtratagem of the devil might be concealed therein, that might tend to draw me out of my proper place, or ſteal me out of my condition. The more I ſaw my own miſery, incapacity and nothingneſs, the plainer it appeared that they rendered me fitter for the deſigns of GOD, whatever they might be, "Oh my LORD, ſaid I, take the weak and the "wretched to do thy works, that thou mayeſt "have all the glory of them, and that man may "attribute nothing of them to himſelf. If thou "ſhouldeſt take a perſon of eminence and great "talents, one might attribute to him ſomething "thereof: But if thou takeſt me, it will be "manifeſt that thou alone art the author of "whatever good ſhall be done." I continued quiet in my ſpirit, leaving the whole affair to GOD, being ſatisfied, if he ſhould require any thing of me, that he would furniſh me with the means of performing it. I held myſelf in readineſs with a full reſolution to execute his orders, when ever he ſhould make them known, though it were to the laying down of my life. I was releaſed from all croſſes I reſumed my care of the ſick, and dreſſing of wounds. And GOD gave me to cure the moſt deſperate. When ſurgeons could do no more, or were going to cut off limbs, it was then that GOD made me cure them.

OH the joy that accompanied me every where, finding ſtill, him who had united me to himſelf, in his own immenſity and boundleſs vaſtitude! Oh how truly did I experience what he ſaid in the Goſpel, by the four Evangeliſts, and by one

" of them twice over, " Whoſoever will loſe his " life for my ſake ſhall find it; and whoſoever " will ſave his life ſhall loſe it."

When I had loſt all created ſupports, and even divine ones, I then found myſelf happily compelled to fall into the pure divine, and to fall into it, through all thoſe very things which ſeemed to remove me further from it. In loſing all the gifts, with all their ſupports, I found the Giver. In loſing the ſenſe and perception of thee in myſelf—I found thee, oh my God, to loſe thee no more in thyſelf, in thy own immutability. Oh poor creatures, who paſs along all your time in feeding on the gifts of God, and think therein to be the moſt favoured and happy, how I pity you if you ſtop here, ſhort of the true reſt, and ceaſe to go forward to God himſelf, through the reſignation of thoſe very gifts which you now delight in.—How many paſs all their lives this way, and think highly of themſelves therein! There are others who being called of God to die to themſelves, yet paſs all their time in a dying life, and in inward agonies, without ever entering into God, through death and a total loſs of ſelf, becauſe they are always willing to retain ſomething under plauſible pretexts, and ſo never loſe themſelves to the whole extent of the deſigns of God. Wherefore they never enjoy God in all his fulneſs; which is a loſs that cannot perfectly be known till another life.

Oh my Lord, what happineſs did not I largely taſte in my ſolitude, and with my little family, where nothing interrupted my tranquility! As I was in the country, and the ſlender age of my

children did not require my application too much, they being in good hands, I retired a great part of the day into a wood, where I paſſed as many days of happineſs as I had had months of ſorrow. Thou oh my God, dealt by me as by thy ſervant Job, rendering me double for all thou hadſt taken from me, and delivering me from all my croſſes. Thou gaveſt me a marvellous facility to ſatisfy every one. What was ſurprizing now, was that my mother-in-law, who had ever been complaining of me, without my doing any thing more than uſual to pleaſe her, declared now none could be better ſatisfied with me than ſhe was. Such as before had cried me down the moſt, now teſtified their ſorrow for it, and became full of my praiſes. My reputation was eſtabliſhed with much more advantage, in proportion as it had appeared to be loſt. I remained in an entire peace, as well without as within. It ſeemed to me that my ſoul was become like that new *Jeruſalem*, ſpoken of in the *Apocalypſe*, *prepared as a bride for her huſband, and where there is no more ſorrow, or ſighing*. I had a perfect indifference to every thing that is here, and an union ſo great with the good will of God, that my own will ſeemed to be intirely loſt. My ſoul could not incline itſelf on one ſide or other, ſince that another will had taken place of its own, but only nouriſhed itſelf with the daily providences of God. It now found a will all divine, which yet was ſo natural and eaſy to it, that it found itſelf infinitely more free in this than ever it had been in its own.

These diſpoſitions have ſtill ſubſiſted, and ſtill grown ſtronger, and more perfect even to this hour, I could neither deſire one thing nor

another, but was content with whatever fell out, without making any reflection thereupon, or giving any attention thereto, except when any in the houſe aſked me, "Will you have this, or "that?" And then I was ſurprized to find that there was nothing left in me which could deſire or chuſe. I was as if every thing, of ſmaller matters, quite diſappeared, a higher power having taken up and filled all their room. I even perceived no more that ſoul which he had formerly conducted by his crook and his ſtaff, becauſe now he alone appeared to me, my ſoul having given up its place to him. It ſeemed to me, as if it was wholly and altogether paſſed into its GOD, to make but one and the ſame thing with him; even as a little drop of water, caſt into the ſea, receives the qualities of the ſea. Oh union of unity, demanded of GOD by JESUS CHRIST for men, and merited by him. How ſtrong is this in a ſoul that is become loſt in its GOD! After the conſummation of this divine unity, the ſoul remains *hid with* CHRIST *in* GOD. This happy loſs is not like thoſe tranſient ones, which extaſy operates, which are rather an abſorbment than union, for the ſoul afterwards finds itſelf again with all its own diſpoſitions. But here ſhe feels that prayer fulfilled—John xvii. 21. *That they all may be one as thou father art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

I WAS obliged to go to PARIS about ſome buſineſs. Having entered into a church, that was very dark, I went up to the firſt confeſſor I found, whom I did not know, nor have ever ſeen ſince. I made a ſimple and ſhort confeſſion; but to the confeſſor himſelf I ſaid not a word. He ſurprized me much in ſaying, "I "know not who you are, whether maid, wife or "widow; but I feel a ſtrong inward motion to "exhort you to do what the LORD has made "known to you, that he requires of you. I "have nothing elſe to ſay." I anſwered him, "Father, I am a widow who have little children. "What elſe could GOD require of me, but to "take due care of them in their education?" He replied, "I know nothing about this. You "know if GOD manifeſts to you that he requires "ſomething of you; there is nothing in the "world which ought to hinder you from doing "his will. One muſt leave one's children to do "that." This ſurprized me much. However, I told him nothing of what I felt for GENEVA. I diſpoſed myſelf ſubmiſſively to quit every thing, if GOD required it of me. I did not look upon it a good I aſpired to, or a virtue I hoped to acquire, or as any thing extraordinary, or as an act that would merit ſome return on GOD's part; but only gave myſelf up to be led in the way of my duty, whatever it might be, feeling no diſtinction between my own will and the will of GOD in me.

In this diſpoſition, I lived with my family in the greateſt tranquility until one of my friends, had a great deſire to go on a miſſion to SIAM. He lived twenty leagues from my houſe. As he was ready to make a vow to this purpoſe, he found himſelf ſtopped and an impulſe to come to ſpeak to me. He came immediately, and as he had ſome reluctance to declare his mind to me, he went to read prayers in my chappel, hoping GOD would be ſatisfied with his making the vow, but as he was performing divine ſervice in my hearing, he was ſtopped again. Whereupon he left the chapel to come to ſpeak to me. He then told me his intention.

THOUGH I had no thought of ſaying any thing poſitive to him on that head, I felt an impreſſion in my ſoul to relate to him my caſe, and the idea I had had of a long time paſt for GENEVA. I told him a dream I had had, which appeared to me ſupernatural, and had reference hereto: And when I had done, I felt a ſtrong impulſe to ſay to him, "You muſt go to SIAM. You muſt "ſerve me in this affair. It is for that end "GOD has ſent you hither; I deſire you to give "me your advice." After three days having conſidered the matter, and conſulted GOD in it, he told me that he believed I was to go thither; but to be the better aſſured of it, it would be needful to ſee the Biſhop of GENEVA; that if he approved of my deſign, it would be a ſign that it was from GOD; if not, I muſt drop it. I fell in with his ſentiment. He then offered to go to ANNECY*, to ſpeak to the Biſhop, and to bring me

* ANNECY, a city ſituate on a lake of the ſame name, 20 miles ſouth of GENEVA. In this city was the reſidence of the Biſhop of GENEVA.

me a faithful account of what they ſhould agree on together. As he was advanced in years, we were deliberating what way he could take ſo long a journey, when there came two travellers, who told us the Biſhop was at Paris. This I looked on as an extraordinary providence. He adviſed me to write to Father La Combe, and recommend the affair to his prayers, as he was in that country. He then ſpoke to the biſhop at Paris; and I, having occaſion to go thither, ſpoke to him alſo.

I TOLD him, "that my deſign was to go "into the country, to employ there my ſub-"ſtance, to erect an eſtabliſhment for all ſuch "as ſhould be willing truly to ſerve GOD, and to "give themſelves unto him without reſerve; and "that many of the ſervants of GOD had encou-"raged me thereto." The biſhop approved of the deſign. He ſaid, "there were new Catholicks going to eſtabliſh themſelves at GEX*, and that it was a providential thing. I anſwered him, "that I had no vocation for GEX, but for GE-"NEVA." He ſaid, "I might go from thence to that city.

I THOUGHT this was a way which divine Providence had opened, for my taking this journey with the leſs difficulty. And as I yet knew nothing poſitive of what GOD would require at my hand, I was not willing to oppoſe any thing. "Who knows, ſaid I, but the will of GOD is on-"ly that I ſhould contribute to this eſtabliſh-"ment?"

* GEX, a town of FRANCE, 7 miles north-weſt of GENEVA.

I WENT to ſee the prioreſs of the new catholicks at Paris. She ſeemed much rejoiced, and aſſured me ſhe would gladly join me. As ſhe is a great ſervant of GOD, this confirmed me: For when I could reflect a little, which was but ſeldom, I thought GOD would make choice of her for her virtue, and me for my worldly ſubſtance; for when I inadvertantly looked at myſelf, I could not think GOD would make uſe of me: But when I ſaw the things in GOD, then I perceived the more I was nothing, the fitter I was for his deſigns. As I ſaw nothing in myſelf extraordinary, as I looked on myſelf in the loweſt ſtage of perfection, and imagined that an extraordinary degree of inſpiration was neceſſary for extraordinary deſigns, this made me heſitate, and fear deception. I did not yet ſufficiently comprehend, that to follow, ſtep by ſtep, the guidance of divine Providence was the greateſt and pureſt light. It was not that I was in fear of any thing, as to my perfection and ſalvation which I had referred to GOD; but I was afraid of not doing his will by being too ardent and haſty in doing it. I went to conſult Father CLAUDE MARTIN. At that time he gave me no deciſive anſwer, demanding time for praying about it; ſaying he would write to me what ſhould appear to him to be the will of GOD concerning me.

I found it hard to get to ſpeak to M. BERTOT, both on account of his being difficult of acceſs, and of my knowing how he condemned things extraordinary, or out of the common road, beſide his never having given me the leaſt help in regard to my inward leadings: Yet, being my director, I ſubmitted, againſt my own views or judgment, to what he ſaid, laying down all my own

own experiences when duty required me to believe and obey. I thought however, that in an affair of this importance, I ought to addreſs myſelf to him, and prefer his ſenſe of the matter to that of every one beſide, perſuaded he would infallibly tell me the will of GOD. I went to him then, and he told me that my deſign was of GOD, and that he had had a ſenſe given him of GOD for ſome time paſt, that he required ſomething of me. I therefore returned home to ſet every thing in order. I loved my children much, having had great ſatisfaction in being with them, but reſigned all to GOD to follow his will.

[*Divers other circumſtances ſhe recites, and providential ſigns concurring to confirm her herein, of which thoſe here given, and thoſe which follow may be ſufficient, as it might be tedious to the reader to go through every minute particular.*]

AT my return from Paris, I left myſelf in the hands of GOD, reſolved not to take any ſtep, either to make the thing ſucceed or to hinder it, either to advance or retard it, but ſingly to move as he ſhould be pleaſed to direct me. I had myſterious dreams, which portended nothing but croſſes, perſecutions and afflictions. My heart ſubmitted to whatever it ſhould pleaſe GOD to ordain. I had one which was very ſignificant.

BEING employed in ſome neceſſary work, I ſaw near me a little animal which appeared to be dead. This animal I took to be the envy of ſome perſons, which ſeemed to have been dead for ſome time. I took it up, and as I ſaw it ſtrove hard to bite me, and that it magnified to the view of the eye, I caſt it away; but found thereupon that

that it filled my fingers with ſharp-pointed prickles like needles. I came to one of my acquaintance to get him to take them out; but he puſhed them deeper in, and left me ſo, till a charitable prieſt, of great merit, (whoſe countenance is ſtill preſent with me, though I have not yet ſeen him, but believe I ſhall before I die) took this animal up with a pair of pincers. As ſoon as he held it faſt, thoſe ſharp prickles fell off, of themſelves. Then I found that I eaſily entered into a place, which before had ſeemed inacceſſible. And tho' the mire was up to my girdle, in my way to a deſerted church, I went over it, without getting any dirt. It will be eaſy to ſee in the ſequel what this ſignified.

DOUBTLESS you will wonder that I, who make ſo little account of things extraordinary, relate dreams. I do it for two reaſons; firſt, out of fidelity, having promiſed to omit nothing of what ſhould come into my mind; ſecondly, becauſe it is the method GOD makes uſe of to communicate himſelf to faithful ſouls, to give them foretokens of things to come, which concern them. Thus myſterious dreams are found in many places of the holy ſcriptures. They have ſingular properties, as

1ſt, To leave a certainty that they are myſterious, and will have their effect in their ſeaſon;

2d, To be hardly ever effaced out of the memory, though one forgets all others;

3d, To redouble the certainty of their truth every time one thinks of them; and

4th,

4th. They generally leave a certain unction, a divine ſenſe or ſavour at one's waking. I received letters from ſundry religious perſons, ſome of whom lived far from me, and from one another, relating to my going forth in the ſervice of GOD, and ſome of them to Geneva in particular, in ſuch a manner as ſurprized me. One of them intimated that I muſt there bear the croſs and be perſecuted; and another of them that I ſhould be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and arms to the maimed.

THE eccleſiaſtic, or chaplain, of our houſe was much afraid leſt I was under a deluſion: But what at that time greatly confirmed me was that Father Claude Martin, whom I mentioned above, writ to me that, after many prayers, GOD had given him to know that he required me at GENEVA, and to make a free ſacrifice of every thing to him, I anſwered him, "that "perhaps GOD required of me nothing more "than a ſum of money to aſſiſt in a founda-"tion which was going to be eſtabliſhed there." He replied, that GOD had made him know that he wanted not my worldly ſubſtance but myſelf. At the very ſame time with this letter I received one from Father LA COMBE, who writ to me that GOD had given him a certainty, as he had done to ſeveral of his good and faithful ſervants and hand-maids, that he wanted me at GENEVA. The writers of theſe two letters lived above a hundred and fifty leagues from each other; and yet both writ the ſame thing. I could not but be ſomewhat ſurprized to receive at the ſame time two letters ſo exactly alike, from two perſons living ſo far diſtant from each other.

As

As ſoon as I became fully convinced of its being the will of GOD, and ſaw nothing on earth capable of detaining me, my ſenſes had ſome pain about leaving my children. And upon reflecting thereon a doubt ſeized my mind. Oh my GOD! Had I reſted on myſelf, or on the creatures, I ſhould have revolted; and, as we read in the ſcriptures, *leaned on a broken reed, which would have pierced my hand.* But relying on thee alone, what needed I to fear? I reſolved then to go as a fool, regardleſs of the cenſures of ſuch as underſtand not what it is to be a ſervant of GOD, and to receive and obey his orders. I firmly believed that he, by his Providence, would furniſh the means neceſſary for the education of my children; and that in pure faith. I put every thing by degrees in order, GOD alone being my guide.

CHAP. XXX.

WHILST Providence, on the one hand, appointed my forſaking all things, it ſeemed on the other to make my chains the ſtronger, and my ſeparation the more blameable; for none could receive ſtronger marks of affection from an own mother than thoſe which I received at this time from my mother-in-law; even the leaſt ſickneſs which befell me made her very uneaſy: She ſaid, "ſhe had a veneration for my virtue." I believe what contributed not a little to this change was, that ſhe had heard from one or other, that three perſons had offered ſuit to me, and that I refuſed them, tho' their fortune and quality was quite ſuperior to mine. She remembered how ſhe had upbraided me

me on this head, and I anſwered her not a word, whereby ſhe might underſtand that it depended only on myſelf to marry to advantage. She began to fear leaſt ſuch rigorous treatment, as hers had been toward me, might excite me to deliver myſelf, by ſuch means, with honour from her tyranny, and was ſenſible what damage that might be to my children. So ſhe was now very tender to me on every occaſion.

I FELL extremely ill. I thought that GOD had accepted of my willingneſs to ſacrifice all to him, and required that of my life. During this illneſs, my mother-in-law went not from my bed-ſide; her many tears proved the ſincerity of her affection. I was very much affected at it, and thought I loved her as my true mother. How then ſhould I leave her now, being ſo far advanced in age? The maid, who till then had been my plague, took an inconceivable friendſhip for me. She praiſed me every where, extolling my virtue to the higheſt; and ſerved me with extraordinary reſpect. She begged pardon for all that ſhe had made me ſuffer, and died of grief after my departure.

THERE was a prieſt of merit, an inward man, who had fallen in with a temptation of taking on him an employ which I was ſenſible GOD did not call him to; and therefore, fearing it might be a ſnare to him, I adviſed him againſt it. He promiſed me he would not, and yet accepted of it; he then avoided me, joined ſecretly in calumniating me, gradually fell away from grace, and died ſoon after.

THERE was a Nun in a monaſtery I often went to, who was entered into a ſtate of purification

cation which every one in the houſe looked on as diſtraction; and therefore they locked her up, which had like to have deſtroyed her. All that went to ſee her called it phrenzy or melancholy. I knew her to be devout. I requeſted to ſee her. As ſoon as I approached, I felt an impreſſion of her ſtate, being that of purification. I deſired of the Superior, that ſhe ſhould not be locked up, nor people admitted to ſee her, but that ſhe would confide her to my care; for I hoped things would change. I diſcovered that her greateſt pain was at being counted a fool. I adviſed her to bear the ſtate of fooliſhneſs, JESUS CHRIST had been willing to bear it before HEROD. This ſacrifice gave her a calmneſs at once. But as GOD was willing to purify her ſoul, he ſeparated her from all thoſe things, to which ſhe had had before the greateſt attachment. At laſt, after ſhe had patiently undergone her ſufferings, her ſuperior writ to me "that I was in the right, and that ſhe was now "come out of that ſtate of dejection, in greater "purity than ever." GOD gave to me alone at that time to know her ſtate.—This was the commencement of the Gift of diſcerning ſpirits, which I afterwards received more fully.

THE winter before I left home was one of the longeſt and hardeſt that had been for ſeveral years, viz. that of 1680. It was followed with extreme ſcarcity, which proved to me an occaſion of exerciſing charity. My mother-in-law joined me heartily herein, and appeared to me ſo much changed, that I could not but be both ſurprized and overjoyed at it. We diſtributed at the houſe ninety-ſix dozen of loaves every week, but the private charities to the baſhful poor were much greater. I kept poor boys and girls employed at work: And

And GOD gave ſuch bleſſings to my alms, that I did not find that my family loſt any thing by it. Before the death of my huſband, my mother-in-law told him, that I ſhould ruin him with my charities, tho' he himſelf was ſo charitable, that in a very dear year, while he was young, he diſtributed a conſiderable ſum; but now ſhe repeated this to him ſo often, that he commanded me to ſet down in writing all the money I laid out, both what I gave for the expence of the houſe, and all that I cauſed to be bought, that from thence he might better judge of what I gave to the poor. This new obligation, which I was brought under, appeared to me ſo much the harder, as for above eleven years we had been married I never before had the like required of me. What troubled me moſt was the fear of having nothing to give to ſuch as wanted. However I ſubmitted to it, yet without retrenching any part of my charities. I did not indeed ſet down any of my alms, and yet my account of expences was found to anſwer exactly. I was much ſurprized and aſtoniſhed at it, and eſteemed it one of the wonders of providence, for I ſaw plainly it was but given out of thy treaſury, oh my GOD, that made me more liberal of what I thought was the LORD'S, and not mine. Oh if we but knew how far charity, inſtead of waſting or leſſening the ſubſtance of the donor, bleſſed increaſed and multiplied it profuſely; how much is there in the world of uſeleſs diſſipation, which if properly applied, might amply ſerve for the ſubſiſtence of the poor, and would abundantly be reſtored, and amply rewarded to the Families of thoſe who gave it.

IN the time of my greateſt pains, ſome years after my huſband's death (for they begun three years

years before my widowhood, and laſted four years after) my footman came one day to tell me, for I was then in the country, that there was in the road a poor ſoldier dying. I made him be brought in, and having ordered a ſeparate place to be made ready for him, I kept him above a fortnight. His malady was a flux, which he had taken in the army. It was ſo ſtinking and nauſeous, that though the domeſticks were charitably inclined, no body could bear to come near him. I went myſelf to take away his veſſels. But never did I any thing of the kind which was ſo hard to me. When I emptied them, there was ſuch an intolerable ſtench, that I was ready to faint. I frequently made effors for a full quarter of an hour at a time. I ſeemed as if my very heart was going to come up; yet I never deſiſted from doing it. I ſometimes kept poor people at my houſe to dreſs their moſt putrid ſores; but never met with any thing ſo terrible as this. So the poor man, after I had made him receive his ſacrament, died of it.

WHAT gave me now no ſmall concern was the tenderneſs I had for my children, eſpecially my younger ſon, whom I had ſtrong reaſons for loving. I ſaw him inclined to good; and every thing ſeemed to favour the hopes I had conceived of him. I thought it running a great riſque to leave him to another's education. My daughter I deſigned taking with me, though ſhe was at this time ill of a very tedious fever. Providence was pleaſed however ſo to order it that ſhe was timely recovered. The ties, with which GOD held me cloſely united to himſelf, were infinitely ſtronger than thoſe of fleſh and blood. The laws of my ſacred marriage obliged me to give up all, to follow

low my ſpouſe whitherſoever it was his pleaſure to call me after him. Though I often heſitated, and doubted much before I went, I never doubted after my going off, of its being his will; and though men, who judge of things only according to the ſucceſs they ſeem to have, have taken occaſion from my diſgraces and ſufferings, to judge of my calling, and to run it down as error, illuſion and imagination; it is that very perſecution, and the multitude of ſtrange croſſes it has drawn upon me, (of which this *impriſonment I now ſuffer is one,) which have confirmed me in the certainty of its truth and validity; nay I am more than ever convinced that the reſignation which I have made of every thing is in pure obedience to the divine will. The goſpel effectually in this point ſhews itſelf to be true, which has promiſed to thoſe that ſhall leave all for the love of GOD, *an hundred fold in this life, and perſecutions alſo.* And have not I infinitely more than an hundred fold, in ſo entire a poſſeſſion as thou, my GOD, haſt taken of me; in that unſhaken firmneſs which thou giveſt me in my ſufferings, in a perfect tranquillity in the midſt of a furious tempeſt, which aſſaults me on every ſide; in an unſpeakable joy, enlargedneſs and liberty which I enjoy in a moſt ſtraight and rigorous captivity. I have no deſire that my impriſonment ſhould end before the right time. I love my chains. Every thing is equal to me, as I have no will of my own, but purely the love and will of him who poſſeſſes me. My ſenſes indeed have not any reliſh for ſuch things, but my heart is ſeparated from them, and born over them: And my perſeverance is not

* She wrote this when confined in St. MARIE, in PARIS.

of myſelf, but of him who is my life; ſo that I can ſay with the Apoſtle, "It is no more I that "live, but JESUS CHRIST that liveth in me. "It is he in whom I live, move, and have my "being."

To return to the ſubject, from which I often wander without reflection. I ſay then that I was not ſo uneaſy to go with the new catholicks, as to engage with them, not finding a ſufficient attraction to the latter, though I ſought for it, I longed indeed to contribute to the converſion * of wandering ſouls, and GOD made uſe of me to convert † ſeveral families before my departure, one of which was compoſed of eleven or twelve perſons. Beſides, Father La Combe had written to me, to make uſe of this opportunity for ſetting off, but did not tell me whether I ought to engage with them or not. Thus it was the providence of my GOD alone, which ordered every thing, to which I was reſigned without any reſerve: And that hindered me from engaging with them.

ONE day, thro' infidelity, reflecting humanly on this undertaking of mine, I found my faith ſtaggering, weakened with a fear leſt I were under a miſtake, which ſlaviſh fear was increaſed by an eccleſiaſtic at our houſe, who told me it was

* N B. But not to the perſecuting of them, as ſhe is falſely accuſed of.

† Some may be apt to call this change from Calviniſm to the Romiſh Church *perverſion* inſtead of *converſion*,—but this is thro' ignorance, and not diſtinguiſhing between the outward dead form, and the inward living power and grace, which may be enjoyed in every outward profeſſion.

a raſh

a raſh and ill adviſed deſign. Being a little diſcouraged, I opened the bible, and at firſt met with this paſſage in ISAIAH, *Fear not thou worm* Jacob, *and ye men of* Iſrael. *I will help thee ſaith the* Lord, *and thy* Redeemer *the holy one of* Iſrael. Chap. lxi. 14. and near it, *Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine: When thou paſſeſt thro' the waters, I will be with thee, &c.*

I HAD a very great courage given me for going, but could not perſuade myſelf that it would be to ſettle with the new catholicks. It was however neceſſary to ſee ſiſter *Garnier*, their Superior at *Paris*, in order to take our meaſures together: But I could not go to *Paris*, becauſe that journey would have hindered me from taking another at the time when I ſhould have been obliged to go off. She then, though much indiſpoſed, reſolved to come and ſee me. In what a wonderful manner, oh my GOD, didſt thou conduct things by thy providence, to make every thing come to the point of thy will! Every day I ſaw new miracles, which both amazed and ſtill more confirmed me; for with a paternal goodneſs thou tookeſt care of even the ſmalleſt things. As ſhe intended ſetting off, ſhe fell ſick: And thou permitted it to fall out ſo, to give room thereby for a perſon, who would have diſcovered every thing, in the mean time to take a journey. As ſhe had given me notice of the day ſhe intended to ſet off, ſeeing that day was exceſſively hot, and ſo ſultry that I imagined, that being taken ſo much tender care of as ſhe was at home, they would not ſuffer her to begin her journey then, (which, really proved to be the caſe, as ſhe afterwards told me) I prayed to the LORD to be pleaſed to grant a wind to riſe,

to moderate the violent heat. Scarce had I prayed but there aroſe ſuddenly ſo refreſhing a wind, that I was ſurprized at it: And the wind did not ceaſe during her whole journey.

I WENT to meet her, and brought her to my country-houſe, in ſuch ſort that ſhe was not ſeen or known of any body. What embarraſſed me a little was, that I had two of my domeſticks who knew her: But as I was then endeavouring the converſion of a lady, they eaſily believed that it was on this account I had ſent for her, and that it was neceſſary to keep it ſecret, that the lady might not be diſcouraged from coming. Tho' I knew nothing of controverſial points, yet GOD ſo furniſhed me that I did not fail to anſwer all her objections, and reſolve all her doubts (to ſuch a degree) that ſhe could not but give herſelf up entirely to GOD. Though ſiſter Garnier had a good ſhare both of grace and natural underſtanding, yet her words had not ſuch an effect on this ſoul as thoſe with which GOD furniſhed me, as ſhe aſſured me herſelf. She even could not forbear ſpeaking of it. I felt a movement to beg her of GOD, as a teſtimony of his holy will concerning me; and he was pleaſed to grant it, (tho' ſhe did not make her abjuration till after my departure) willing that I ſhould go off without any other aſſurance, than that his divine Providence was conducting all things. The ſiſter did not declare her thoughts to me for four days. Then ſhe told me ſhe would not go with me. At this I was the more ſurprized, as I had perſuaded myſelf that GOD would grant to her virtue what he might refuſe to my demerits. Beſide, the reaſons ſhe gave appeared to me to be merely human, and void of ſupernatural grace. That made me heſitate

tate a little: Then, taking new courage, through the reſignation of my whole ſelf, I ſaid, "As "I go not thither for your ſake: I will not "fail to go even without you." This ſurprized her, as ſhe owned to me; for ſhe thought that, on her refuſal, I would decline my purpoſe of going.

I regulated every thing, wrote down the contract of aſſociation with them as I thought proper. No ſooner had I done it, but I felt great perturbation and trouble of mind for it. I told her my pain, and that I had no doubt but GOD demanded me at GENEVA, yet did not let me ſee that he would have me to be of their congregation. She deſired to have ſome time till after prayers and communion, and that then ſhe would tell me what ſhe thought GOD required of me. Accordingly he directed her contrary both to her intereſts and inclination. She then told me, "I "ought not to connect myſelf with her, that it "was not GOD's deſign; that I only ought to go "with her ſiſters, and that when I ſhould be there, "Father LA COMBE, *(whoſe letter ſhe had ſeen)* "would ſignifiy to me the divine will." I entered at once into theſe ſentiments, and my ſoul then regained the ſweets of inward peace.

MY firſt thought had been (before I heard of the new catholicks going to GEX) to go directly to GENEVA, as at this time there were catholicks there in ſervice, and otherwiſe; and to take ſome little room without any noiſe, and without declaring myſelf at firſt: And as I knew how to make up all ſorts of ointments, to heal wounds and eſpecially the king's evil, of which there is abun-

dance in that place, and for which I had a moſt certain cure, I hoped eaſily to inſinuate myſelf by this way; and with the charities which I ſhould have done to have won over many of the people. I have no doubt but, if I had followed this impulſe, things would have ſucceeded better: But I thought I ought rather to follow the ſentiments of the Biſhop than my own. What am I ſaying? Has not thy eternal word, oh my GOD, had its effect and accompliſhment in me? Man ſpeaks as man: But when we behold things in GOD, we ſee them in far other lights. Yes my LORD, thy deſign was to give GENEVA not to my cares, words or works, but to my ſufferings: For the more I ſee things appear hopeleſs, the more do I hope for the converſion of that city by a way known to thee only: Yes, oh GENEVA, thou ſhalt ſee the truth flouriſh again within thy walls, which error has baniſhed from them: And very happily ſhall thoſe words be verified in thy favour, which are inſcribed on thy town-houſe: *After darkneſs light*; though now thy ſons take them in a quite contrary ſenſe. One day ſhalt thou be illuminated with the light of truth, and that beautiful temple of St. PETER ſhall again have the advantage of the pure goſpel. How true is it in one ſenſe, oh my LORD, that thou haſt made me the daughter of the croſs of GENEVA, and how heartily would I give my blood to ſee thy croſs ſprout up there! Father LA COMBE has told me ſince, that he had had a ſtrong impulſe to write to me, not to engage with the new catholicks; that he believed it not to be the will of GOD concerning me; but he omitted doing it. As to my director Mr. BERTOT, he died four months before my departure. I had ſome intimations of his death, and it ſeemed

ſeemed as if he bequeathed me a portion of his ſpirit to help his children.

I WAS ſeized with a fear, that the check I had felt, at ſtripping myſelf (in favour of the new catholicks, of what I had deſigned for GENEVA) was a ſtratagem of nature, which does not love to be ſtripped. I wrote to ſiſter GARNIER to get a contract drawn up according to my firſt memorial. GOD permitted me to commit this fault, to make me the more ſenſible of his protection over me.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

THE LIFE
OF
LADY GUION.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

I WENT off, in a ſtrange renunciation, and in great ſimplicity, ſcarce able to render the reaſon of what made me in ſuch a manner quit my family, which I moſt tenderly loved, being without any poſitive aſſurance, *yet hoping even againſt hope itſelf*. I went to the new Catholicks at *Paris*, where providence wrought wonders to conceal me. They ſent for the Notary, who had drawn up the contract of engagement. When he read it to me, I felt ſuch a repugnance to it, that I could not bear to hear it to the end, much leſs ſign it. The Notary wondered at it; and much more ſo, when Siſter GARNIER came in, and told him herſelf, *that there needed no contract of engagement*.—I was enabled through divine aſſiſtance, to put my affairs in very great order, and to write ſundry letters by the inſpiration of the Spirit of GOD, and not my own ſpirit. This was what I had never experienced before. But

was

was given me at that time only as a beginning, and has ſince been granted me much more perfectly, as I ſhall relate in the ſequel.

I HAD two domeſticks, whom it was very difficult for me to diſcharge, as I did not think to take them with me. Yet If I had left them, they would have told of my departure; and I ſhould have been ſent after; as I was when it was known. But GOD ſo ordered it that they were willing to follow me: They were of no uſe to me, and ſoon after turned into *France*. I took with me only my little daughter, and two maids to ſerve us both. We ſet off in a boat upon the river, though I had taken places in the ſtage-coach, in order that, if they ſearched for me in it, they might not find me. I went to *Melun* * to wait for it there.

IT was ſurpriſing that, in this boat the child without adverting to what ſhe did, could not forbear making croſſes, employing a perſon to cut her bulruſhes for that purpoſe. She then put round me, all over, above three hundred of them. I let her do it, and inwardly apprehended that it was not without its myſtery. I felt an interior certainty that I was going to meet with croſſes in abundance; and that this child was *ſowing* the croſs, for me to *reap* it. Siſter GARNIER who ſaw, that they could not reſtrain her from covering me with croſſes, ſaid to me, "What "that child does appears to be myſterious;" and turning to the little girl, ſhe ſaid, "give me ſome

* *Melun* is a town on the river Seyne, 25 miles ſouth-eaſt from Paris.

croſſes

croſſes too, my pretty pet;" "No, ſhe replied, they are all for my dear mother;" but gave her one to ſtop her importunity, then continued putting more on me: After which ſhe deſired ſome river-flowers, which floated on the water, to be given her; and braiding a garland, ſhe put it on my head, and ſaid to me, "After the croſs you ſhall be crowned." I admired all this in ſilence, and offered myſelf up to the pure love of GOD, as a victim, free and willing to be ſacrificed to him *.

SOME time before my departure, a particular friend of mine, who is a true ſervant of GOD, related to me a viſion ſhe had had reſpecting me. "She ſaw my heart ſurrounded with thorns; that "our Lord appeared in it well pleaſed; that, "though the thorns ſeemed likely to tear it, yet, "inſtead of doing that, they only rendered it "fairer, and our Lord's approbation the ſtron-"ger."

IN my way, at *Corbeil*, † I met with the prieſt whom GOD had firſt made uſe of, ſo powerfully to draw me to his love. He approved of my deſign to leave all for the LORD; but he thought I ſhould not be well ſuited with the new Catholicks. He told me ſome particular things about them, to ſhew that our leadings were incompatible. He gave me a caution not to let them know that I walked in the inward path; that, if I did, I muſt

* This little daughter lived to be married to the Count de Vaux, as we ſhall ſee in the third part Chap. xi.

† *Corbeil*, a little town on the river Seyne, 16 miles ſouth from Paris.

expect

expect nothing but preſecutions from them. But it is in vain to contrive to hide, when GOD ſees it beſt for us to ſuffer, and when our wills are utterly reſigned to him, and totally paſſed into his. Oh King of divine lovers! How didſt thou ſtrike on thyſelf, in all the juſtice of GOD: And this ſoul devoted to imitate, and be conformable to thee, being cloathed in thy righteous indignation againſt its own tranſgreſſions, ſtrikes on itſelf in thy juſtice. Oh admirable thing, only known by experience!

AT *Paris* I gave the new Catholicks all the money I had. I reſerved not to myſelf a ſingle penny, rejoicing to be poor after the example of JESUS CHRIST. I brought from home nine thouſand livers: As by my donation I had reſerved none to myſelf, and by a contract lent them ſix thouſand; this ſix thouſand has returned to my Children but none of it to me, which gives me no trouble; for poverty, thus procured, makes my riches. The reſt I gave entirely to the ſiſters who were with us, as well to ſupply their travelling expences, as for their beginning to buy furniture. I did not reſerve ſo much as my linen for my own uſe, putting it in the common repoſitary. I had neither a locked coffer, nor purſe. I had brought but little linen for fear of miſtruſt; and leaſt, in wanting to carry off clothes, I ſhould have been diſcovered. My perſecutors have not failed to report that I had brought great ſums from home, which I had imprudently expended, and given to the relations of father *La Combe*, which is as falſe, as it is true I had not a penny; and that, on my arrival at *Annecy*, a poor man aſking alms, I, having nothing elſe, gave him the buttons from my ſleeves. At another time I gave a poor

a poor man a little ring, quite plain, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, which I had worn as a token of my marriage with him.

WE joined the flying ſtage at *Melun*, where I left ſiſter *Garnier*, and went on with the other ſiſters, with whom I had no acquaintance. Theſe carriages were very fatiguing, and I got no ſleep through ſo long a journey, and though my daughter, a very tender child, only five years of age, got ſcarce any, yet we bore ſo great a fatigue without falling ſick by the way; and this child had not an hour's uneaſineſs, though ſhe was only three hours in bed every night; at another time, half this fatigue, or even the want of reſt, would have thrown me into a fit of ſickneſs. GOD only knows both the ſacrifices which he induced me to make, and the joy of my heart in offering up every thing to him. Had I kingdoms and empires, methinks I ſhould yield them up with ſtill more joy, to give him the higher marks of my love.—But is it a quitting any thing to quit it for him?

AS ſoon as we arrived at the inn, I went to church and ſtayed there till dinner time. In the coach my divine LORD communed with me, and in me, in a manner which the others could not comprehend and indeed did not perceive the cheerfulneſs I ſhewed, in the greateſt dangers, encouraged them. I even ſang hymns of joy at finding myſelf diſengaged from the riches, honours and entanglements of the world. GOD in ſuch a manner protected us that he ſeemed to be to us *a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of a cloud by day*, We paſſed over a very dangerous ſpot between *Lyons* * and *Chambery*. Our carriage broke at coming

Lyons, capital of *Lyonois*, at the confluence of the rivers

coming out of it. Had it happened a little ſooner, we muſt have periſhed.

We arrived at *Annecy* on *Magdalen*'s eve 1681: And on *Magdalen*'s day the biſhop of *Geneva* performed divine ſervice for us, at the tomb of St. *Francis de Sales*. There I renewed my ſpiritual marriage with my Redeemer; as I did every year on this day. There alſo I felt a ſweet remembrance of that Saint, with whom our LORD gives me a ſingular union. I ſay union: For it appears to me that the ſoul in GOD is united with the ſaints, and the more ſo as they are the more conformable to him: And it is an union of unity which it pleaſes GOD ſometimes to revive, and awaken in the ſoul for his own glory; at ſuch times thoſe ſaints are rendered more intimately preſent to that ſoul in GOD: And this revival is as it were an holy intercourſe of friend with friend, in him who unites them all in in one immortal tie. Genererally all continues hid with JESUS CHRIST in GOD.

THAT day we left *Annecy*; and on the next went to prayers at *Geneva*, at the houſe of the *French* reſident. I had much joy at the communion; and it ſeemed to me as if GOD more powerfully united me to himſelf. And there I prayed to him for the converſion of that great people. That evening we arrived late at *Gex*, where we found only bare walls; though the Biſhop of *Geneva* had aſſured us that the houſe was furniſhed, as undoubtedly he believed it to be. We lodged

vers *Rhone* and *Saone*, 225 miles S. E. from *Paris*, and 45 miles W. from *Chambery* the capital city of *Savoy*, which laſt is 45 miles S. from *Geneva*.

ed at the houſe of the ſiſters of the charity. who were ſo kind as to give us their beds.

I was in great pain of mind for my daughter, who viſibly fell away. I had a ſtrong deſire to place her with the *Urſulines* at *Tonon*. My heart was ſo affected on her behalf, that I could not forbear weeping in ſecret for her in bed. Next day I ſaid, "I would take my daughter to *To-*" *non*, and leave her there, till I ſhould ſee "how we might be accommodated here." They oppoſed it ſtrongly, after a manner which ſeemed very hard-hearted, as well as ungrateful, ſeeing ſhe was juſt worn away to a ſkeleton. I looked upon the poor child as a victim, whom I had imprudently ſacrificed. I wrote to Father *La Combe*, intreating him to come to ſee me, to conſult together thereupon; thinking I could not in conſcience keep her in this place any longer. Several days paſſed without my having any anſwer. In the mean time I became reſigned to the will of GOD, whether to have ſuccour or not.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

OUR Lord who took pity on the lamentable condition of my daughter, ſo ordered it, that the Biſhop of *Geneva* wrote to Father *La-Combe*, to come as ſpeedily as poſſible to ſee us, and to conſole us. As ſoon as I ſaw that father, I was ſurprized to feel an interior grace, which I may call COMMUNICATION; and ſuch as I had never had before with any perſon. It ſeemed to me that an influence of Grace came from him to me, through the innermoſt of the ſoul; and returned from me to him, in ſuch ſort that he felt the ſame effect. Like a tide of grace it cauſed a flux and reflux, flowing on into the divine and inviſible ocean. This is a pure and holy union, which GOD alone operates, and which has ſtill ſubſiſted, and even increaſed betwixt us. It is an union exempt from all weakneſs, and from all ſelf-intereſt, which cauſes thoſe, who are bleſſed with it, to rejoice in beholding themſelves, as well as thoſe beloved, loaden with croſſes and afflictions; an union which has no need of the preſence of the body; which at certain times abſence makes not more abſent, nor preſence more preſent; an union unknown to all men but ſuch as are come to experience it: Nor can it ever be experienced but betwixt ſuch ſouls as are united to GOD. As I never before felt ſuch an union of this ſort with any one, it then appeared to me quite new, having never heard of the like. I had no doubt of its being from GOD; ſo far from turning the mind from him, it tended to draw it more deeply into him. It diſſipated all my pains,

pains, and eſtabliſhed me in the moſt profound peace.

GOD gave him at firſt much openneſs toward me. He related to me the mercies GOD had ſhown him, and ſeveral extraordinary things, which gave me at firſt ſome fear. I ſuſpected ſome illuſion, eſpecially in ſuch things as flatter, in regard to the future; little imagining then, that GOD would make uſe of me to draw him from this ſtate, and bring him into that of *naked faith*. But the grace, which flowed from him into my ſoul, recovered me from that fear, as I ſaw it joined with extraordinary humility; and that far, from being elevated with the gifts which GOD had liberally conferred on him, or with his own profound learning, no perſon could have a lower opinion of himſelf than he had. He told me "As "to my daughter, it would be beſt for me to "take her to *Touon*, where he thought ſhe would "be very well ſituated." And as to myſelf, after I had mentioned to him my diſlike to the manner of life of the new Catholicks, he told me, "that "he did not think that it would be my proper "place to be long with them; but that it would "be beſt for me to ſtay there, free from all en-"gagements, till GOD, by the guidance of his "providence, ſhould make known to me how "he would diſpoſe of me, and draw my mind "to the place whither he would have me to remove." I had already begun to awake regularly *at midnight*, in order to pray. At this time I awoke with theſe words ſuddenly put in my mind, "It is written of me, I will do thy will oh my GOD." This was accompanied with the moſt pure, penetrating, and powerful communication of grace that I had ever experienced. And here I may

remark, that tho' the ſtate of my ſoul was already permanent in newneſs of life; yet this new life was not in that immutability in which it has ſince been. To ſpeak properly, it was a beginning life and a riſing day, which goes on increaſing unto the full meridian; a day never followed by night; a life which fears death no more, not even in death itſelf; becauſe he who has ſuffered the firſt death, ſhall no more be hurt of the ſecond. *From Midnight* I continued on my knees till four o'clock in the morning, in prayer, in a ſweet intercourſe with GOD, and did the ſame alſo the night following.

NEXT day, after prayers, Father *La Combe* told me, that he had had a very great certainty that I was a ſtone which GOD deſigned for the foundation of ſome great building. But what that building was he knew no more than I. After whatever manner then it is to be, whether his divine Majeſty will make uſe of me in this life, for ſome deſign known to himſelf only, or will make me one of the ſtones of the new and heavenly JERUSALEM, it ſeems to me that ſuch ſtone cannot be poliſhed, but by the ſtrokes of the hammer; and that our LORD has given to this ſoul of mine the qualities of the ſtone, *viz.* firmneſs, a reſignation, like inſenſibility, to endure hardneſs and the operations of his hand.

I CARRIED my little daughter to the *Urſulines* at *Tonon*. That poor child took a vaſt fondneſs for Father *La Combe*, ſaying, "He is a good father, "one from GOD." Here I found a hermit, whom they called *Anſelm*. He was a perſon of the moſt extraordinary ſanctity, that had appeared for ſome time. He was from *Geneva*; and GOD had miraculouſly

miraculouſly drawn him from thence, at twelve years of age. He had (with the permiſſion of the Cardinal, at that time Archbiſhop of *Aix* in *Provence*) at nineteen years of age taken the habit of hermit of *St Auguſtine*. He and another lived alone in a little hermitage, where they ſaw nobody but ſuch as came to viſit their chapel. He had lived twelve years in this hermitage, never eating any thing but pulſe with ſalt, and ſometimes oil. Three times a week he lived on bread and water. He never drank wine, and generally made but one meal in twenty-four hours. He wore for a ſhirt a coarſe hair cloath, and lodged on the bare ground. He lived in a continual ſtate of prayer, and in the greateſt humility. GOD had done by him many ſignal miracles.

THIS good hermit had a great ſenſe of the deſigns of GOD on Father *La Combe* and me. But GOD ſhewed him at the ſame time that ſtrange croſſes were preparing for us both, and that we were both deſtined for the aid of ſouls. I did not find, as I expected, any fit place for my daughter at *Tonon*. In regard to her, I thought myſelf like *Abraham*, when going to ſacrifice his ſon.—Father *La Combe*, accoſting me here, ſaid, "welcome, daughter of *Abraham*!" I found little encouragement to leave her there, and could ſtill worſe keep her with myſelf, becauſe we had no room; and the little girls, whom they took to make Catholicks, were all mixed with us, and had contracted ſuch habits as were pernicious. To leave her there I thought not right. The language of the country, where ſcarce any one underſtood *French*, and the food, which ſhe could not take, being ſo far different from ours, were great hardſhips. All my tenderneſs for her was

awakened, and I looked on myſelf as her deſtroyer. I experienced what *Hagar* ſuffered when ſhe put away her ſon *Iſhmael* in the deſart, that ſhe might not be forced to ſee him periſh. I thought, if I had ventured to expoſe myſelf, I ought at leaſt to have ſpared my daughter; as the loſs of her education, and even of her life, appeared to me inevitable. Every thing looked black in regard to her.

I thought that, with her natural diſpoſition and fine qualities, ſhe might have ſhined and attracted admiration, if educated in France, and been likely to have ſuch offers for marriage, as ſhe could never hope to meet with in this poor country; in which, if ſhe ſhould recover, ſhe would never be likely to be fit for any thing. Here ſhe could eat nothing of what was got for her. All her ſubſiſtence was only ſome ſpoonfuls of unpleaſant and diſagreeable broth, which I forced her to take againſt her will. I ſeemed like a ſecond *Abraham*, holding the knife over her to deſtroy her. Our Lord would have me make a ſacrifice to him, without any conſolation, and plunged in ſorrow, night was the time which gave vent to it. He made me ſee, on one ſide, the grief of her grand-mother, if ſhe ſhould hear of her death, which ſhe would impute to my taking the child away from her; and the great reproach it would be accounted among all the family. The gifts of nature ſhe was endowed with were now like pointed darts which pierced me. I believe that GOD ſo ordered it, to purify me from too human an attachment, which was ſtill ſo ready to ſtick cloſe to me. For after I returned from the *Urſulines* at *Tonon*, they changed her

her manner of diet, and gave her what was ſuitable to her delicacy; whereby, in a ſhort time ſhe recovered finely.

CHAP. III.

AS ſoon as it was known in *France* that I was gone, there was a general outcry. Thoſe who attacked me, with the moſt violence upon it, were the human ſpiritualiſts; Father *de la Mothe* wrote to me, that all perſons of learning, of piety, the gown and the ſword, united in cenſuring me. To alarm me ſtill more, he informed me that my mother-in-law, with whom I had truſted my younger ſon and my children's ſubſtance, was fallen into a ſtate of childhood.—This however was very falſe.

I anſwered all theſe thundering letters as the ſpirit dictated. My anſwers were thought very juſt, and were well reliſhed, whereby thoſe violent exclamations were ſoon changed into applauſes. Father *La Mothe* appeared to change his cenſures into eſteem: but it did not hold long. Self-intereſt threw him back again; being diſappointed in his hopes of a penſion, which he expected I would have ſettled on him. Alſo Siſter *Garnier*, whatever was her reaſon, changed and declared againſt me.

HERE I both eat and ſlept little. The food which was given us was rotten and full of worms, by reaſon of the great heat of the weather, and being kept too long; inſomuch that what I ſhould have formerly beheld with abhorrence now became my only nouriſhment; and yet every thing

was rendered eaſy to me. In GOD I found, with increaſe, every thing which I had loſt for him. That ſpirit, which I once thought I had loſt in a ſtrange ſtupidity, was reſtored to me with inconceivable advantages. I was aſtoniſhed myſelf. I found there was nothing which it was not fit for, or in which it did not ſucceed. Thoſe who obſerved it ſaid, "I had a prodigious ca-"pacity." Tho' I well knew that I had but a poor one; but that in GOD my ſpirit had received a quality which it had never had before. I thought I experienced ſomething of the ſtate which the Apoſtles were in, after they had received the Holy Ghoſt. I knew, I comprehended, I underſtood, I was enabled to do every thing requiſite. I had every ſort of good thing, and no want of any thing. I remembered that fine paſſage of wiſdom, *All good things came to me with her.* Wiſdom of Sol. vii. 2. When JESUS CHRIST the eternal wiſdom is formed in the ſoul, after the death of the firſt *Adam*, it finds in him all good things communicated to it.

SOME time after my arrival at *Gex*, the Biſhop of *Geneva* came to ſee us. He was ſo clearly convinced, and ſo much affected, that he could not forbear expreſſing it. He opened his heart to me on what GOD had required from him. He confeſſed to me his own deviations and infidelity. Every time, when I ſpoke to him, he entered into what I ſaid, and acknowledged it to be the truth; as indeed it was the ſpirit of truth which inſpired me to ſpeak to him, without which I ſhould be only a mere ſimpleton. And yet as ſoon as perſons who ſought for pre-eminence, and could not ſuffer any good but what came from themſelves, ſpoke to him, he was ſo weak as to let himſelf be

be impoſed on with impreſſions againſt the truth. This foible, with others, has hindered him from doing all the good, which otherwiſe he might have done in his dioceſe.

AFTER I had ſpoken to him he ſaid, "he had "it in his mind to give me Father *La Combe* "for director; for that he was a man illuminat-"ed of GOD, who well underſtood the inward "path, and had a ſingular gift of pacifying "ſouls." Theſe were his own words. Greatly was I rejoiced, when the Biſhop appointed him, ſeeing thereby his authority united with the grace which already ſeemed to have given him to me, by an union and effuſion of ſupernatural life and love.—The fatigues I had, and watchings with my daughter, threw me into a violent diſorder, attended with exquiſite pains. The phyſicians judged me in danger, and yet the Siſters of the houſe quite neglected me: Eſpecially her who had the care of the oeconomy, ſhe was ſo penurious, that ſhe did not give me what was neceſſary to ſuſtain life. I had not a penny to help myſelf with, as I had reſerved nothing to myſelf. And beſide, they at that time received all the money which was remitted me from *France*, which was very conſiderable. Thus I practiſed poverty, and was in neceſſity even among thoſe to whom I had given all. They wrote to Father *La Combe*, deſiring him to come to me, as I was ſo extreme ill. On hearing of my condition, he was ſo touched with compaſſion, as to walk on foot all night, it being eight great leagues, but he travelled no otherwiſe in that, as in every thing elſe endeavouring to imitate our LORD JESUS CHRIST *.

As

* Singularly devoted to GOD, and faithful to the ſight

As ſoon as he entered the houſe, my pains abated: And when he had prayed and bleſſed me, laying his hand on my head, I was perfectly cured, to the great aſtoniſhment of my phyſicians; who were not willing to acknowledge the miracle; being not well pleaſed, as they knew that we were come on a religious motive, and their ſentiments and profeſſion was ſo oppoſite to ours.—Theſe ſiſters themſelves adviſed me to go to my daughter, to take milk for a fortnight. Father *La Combe* returned with me. A violent ſtorm aroſe on the lake, which made me very ſick, and ſeemed likely to overſet the boat. But the hand of providence remarkably appeared in our favour; ſo much that it was taken notice of by the mariners and paſſengers, who looked upon Father *La Combe* as a ſaint. Thus we arrived at *Tonon*, where I found myſelf ſo perfectly recovered, that, inſtead of making and uſing the remedies I had propoſed, I went into a retreat, and ſtayed there twelve days. Here I made vows of perpetual *chaſtity*, *poverty* and *obedience*, to wit, readily to obey whatever I ſhould believe to be the will of GOD, alſo to obey the church, and to honour JESUS CHRIST in ſuch a manner as he pleaſed.

AT this time I found that I had the *perfect chaſtity* of love to GOD, mine being without any reſerve, diviſion, or view of intereſt;—*perfect poverty*, by the total privation of every thing that was

ſight of duty which, in the land of darkneſs, was given him, Father *La Combe* appears to have been a laborious good man in his ſtation, not ſhunning the croſs, or ſhrinking from perſecutions; and at laſt, for his fidelity thrown into priſon, where, as far as appears, he ended his days.

was mine, both inwardly and outwardly;—*perfect obedience to the will of* GOD, *ſubmiſſion to the church, and honour to* JESUS CHRIST in loving himſelf only; the effect of which ſoon appeared. When by the loſs of *ourſelves* we are paſſed into GOD, and returned into our origin, our will is made one and the ſame with that of GOD, according to the prayer of CHRIST, "As thou "Father art in me, and I in thee, grant that "they alſo may be one in us." John xvii. 21. Oh but it is then that the will is rendered marvellous, both becauſe it is made the will of GOD, which is the greateſt of miracles; and becauſe it works wonders in him: For as it is GOD who wills in the ſoul, that will has its effect. Scarce has it willed but the thing is done.

WHY then, *may ſome ſay*, ſo many oppreſſions endured? Why do not theſe ſouls, if they have ſuch a power, ſet themſelves free from them? If they had any will to do any thing of that ſort, and it were not granted; that would be the *will of the fleſh*, or the *will of man*, and *not the will of* GOD. John i. 13.

I ROSE conſtantly at midnight, ever waking timely enough to do it. If I wound up my alarm-watch, then I uſed not to wake in time. I ſaw that GOD had the care of a father and a ſpouſe over me. When I had any indiſpoſition, and my body wanted reſt, he did not awake me; but at ſuch times I felt even in my ſleep a ſingular poſſeſſion of him. Some years have paſſed wherein I have had only a kind of half-ſleep; but my ſoul waked the more for GOD, as ſleep ſeemed to ſteal from it every other attention. The LORD made it known alſo to many perſons, that

that he deſigned me for a mother of great people, but a people ſimple and childlike. They took theſe intelligences in a literal ſenſe, and thought it related to ſome inſtitution or congregation: But to me appeared nothing elſe, than the perſons whom it pleaſed GOD that I ſhould afterwards win over to him, to whom I ſhould ſerve as a mother, through his goodneſs; giving them the ſame union of affection for me as that of children for a parent, but an union much deeper and ſtronger; and giving me all that was neceſſary for them, to bring them to walk in the way by which he would lead them, as I ſhall ſhew in the ſequel, when I ſhall ſpeak of that ſtate of maternity, or motherhood.

CHAP. IV.

I WOULD willingly ſuppreſs what I am now about to write if any thing of it were my own, as well on account of the difficulty of expreſſing myſelf thereon, as becauſe few ſouls are capable of leadings ſo little known, and ſo little comprehended, that I have never read of any thing like it.—I ſhall ſay ſomething of the interior diſpoſitions I was then in, if it ſerves you who are willing to be of the number of my children, and if it ſerves ſuch as are already my children, to induce them to let GOD glorify himſelf in them after his manner, and not after their own, I ſhall think my pains well employed. If there be any thing which they do not comprehend, let them die to themſelves, and they will find it much better by experience than from any thing I could ſay: For *expreſſion* never equals *experience*.

AFTER

AFTER I had come out of the trying condition I have ſpoken of, I found it had purified my ſoul, inſtead of blackning it as I had feared. I poſſeſſed GOD after a manner ſo pure, and ſo immenſe, as nothing elſe could equal. In regard to thoughts or deſires, all was ſo clean, ſo naked, ſo loſt in the divinity, that the ſoul had no ſelfiſh movement, however plauſible or delicate; both the powers of the mind and the very ſenſes being wonderfully purified. Sometimes I was ſurprized to find that there appeared not one thought. The imagination, formerly ſo reſtleſs, now no more troubled me: I had no more perplexity or uneaſy reflections. The will, being perfectly dead to all its own appetites, was become void of every human inclination both natural and ſpiritual, and only inclined of GOD to whatever he pleaſed, and in whatever manner he pleaſed. This vaſtitude, or enlargedneſs, which is not bounded by any thing, however plain or ſimple it may be, increaſes every day; ſo that my ſoul in partaking of the qualities of her ſpouſe, ſeems alſo to partake of his immenſity. My prayer was in an openneſs and ſingleneſs inconceivable. I was as it were born up on high, out of myſelf. I believe GOD was pleaſed to bleſs me with this experience, at the beginning of the new life, to make me comprehend, in favour of other ſouls, this paſſage of the ſoul into GOD.

WHEN I went to confeſs, I felt ſuch an immerſion of the ſoul into him, that I could ſcarcely ſpeak. This aſcenſion of the ſpirit, wherein GOD draws the ſoul ſo powerfully, not into its own inmoſt receſs, but into himſelf, is not operated till after the *myſtic death*, wherein the ſoul actually comes

comes out of itſelf to paſs into its divine object. I call it *death*, that is to ſay, a *paſſage* from one thing to another: And it is truly a happy *paſſover* for the ſoul, and its *paſſage* into the promiſed land. The ſpirit which is created to be united to its own principle, (or origin) has ſo powerful a tendency to it, (*that is*, to GOD) that if it were not ſtopt by a continual miracle, its moving quality would cauſe the body to be drawn after it whitherſoever it would, by reaſon of its impetuoſity and noble deſcent: But GOD has given it a terreſtrial body to ſerve for a counterpoiſe. This ſpirit then, created to be united to its origin, without any medium or interſtice, feeling itſelf drawn by its divine object, tends to it with an extreme violence; in ſuch ſort that GOD, ſuſpending for ſome time the power which the body has to hold back the ſpirit, it follows with ardency: But when it is not ſufficiently purified to paſs into GOD, it gradually returns back to itſelf; and as the body reſumes its own quality, it turns to the earth. The ſaints who have been the moſt perfect have advanced to that degree, as to have nothing of all this; and ſome have loſt it towards the end of their lives, becoming ſingle and pure as the others, becauſe they then had in reality and permanence, what they had at firſt only as tranſient fruitions, in the time of the prevalence or dominion of the body. It is certain then that the ſoul, by death to itſelf, paſſes into its divine object: And it is what I then experienced. I found, the farther I went, the more my ſpirit was loſt in its Sovereign, who attracted it more and more to himſelf. And he was pleaſed at firſt that I ſhould know this for the ſake of others, and not for myſelf only. Indeed he drew my ſoul more and more into himſelf,

ſelf, till it loſt itſelf entirely out of ſight, and could perceive itſelf no more. It ſeemed at firſt to paſs into him. As one ſees a river paſs into the ocean, loſe itſelf in it, its water for a time diſtinguiſhed from that of the ſea, till it gradually becomes transformed into the ſame ſea, and poſſeſſes all its qualities; ſo was my ſoul loſt in GOD, who communicated to it his qualities, having drawn it out of all that it had of its own. Its life is an inconceivable innocence, not known or comprehended of thoſe who are ſtill ſhut up in themſelves (or only live to themſelves.)

THE joy which ſuch a ſoul poſſeſſes in its GOD is ſo great, that it experiences the truth of thoſe words of the royal Prophet, "All they who are "in thee, oh LORD, are like perſons raviſhed "with joy." To ſuch a ſoul the words of our LORD ſeem to be addreſſed, "Your joy no man "ſhall take from you." John xvi. 22. It is as it were plunged in a river of peace. Its prayer is continual. Nothing can hinder it from praying to GOD, or from loving him. It amply verifies theſe words in the *Canticles*, "I ſleep but "my heart waketh;" for it finds that even ſleep itſelf does not hinder it from praying. Oh unutterable happineſs! Who could ever have thought that a ſoul, which ſeemed to be in the utmoſt miſery, ſhould ever find a happineſs equal to this? Oh happy *poverty*, happy *loſs*, happy *nothing*, which gives no leſs than GOD himſelf in his own immenſity, no more circumſcribed to the limited manner of the creature, but always drawing it out of that, to plunge it wholly into his own divine Eſſence.

THEN

THEN the ſoul knows that all the ſtates of ſelf-pleaſing viſions, openings, extaſies and raptures, are rather obſtacles, that they don't ſerve this ſtate which is far above them; becauſe the ſtate, which has ſupports, has pain to loſe them; and yet cannot arrive at this without ſuch loſs. In this are verified the words of an experienced Saint; "When I would, *ſays he* poſſeſs nothing "*through ſelf-love*, every thing was given me "without going after it." Oh happy dying of the grain of Wheat, which makes it produce an hundred fold! The ſoul is then ſo paſſive, ſo diſpoſed equally to receive from the hand of GOD either good or evil, as is aſtoniſhing. It receives both the one and the other without any ſelfiſh emotions, letting them flow and be loſt as they come. They paſs away as if they did not touch.

AFTER I finiſhed my retreat with the *Urſulines* at *Tonon*, I returned through *Geneva*; and, having found no other means of conveyance, the *French* Reſident lent me a horſe. As I knew not how to ride on horſeback, I made ſome difficulty of doing it: But as he aſſured me that it was a very quiet horſe, I ventured to mount him. There was a ſort of a Smith who looking at me with a wild haggard look, ſtruck the horſe a blow on the back, juſt as I had got upon him, which made him give a leap. He threw me on the ground with ſuch force that they thought I was killed. I fell on my temple. My cheek bone was broke, and two of my teeth driven into my head. I was ſupported by an inviſible hand: And in a little time I mounted as well as I could on another horſe, and had a man by my ſide to keep me up.

MY

MY relations left me in peace at *Gex*, teſtifying their eſteem for me: And as they had heard at *Paris* of my miraculous cure, it made a great noiſe there. Many perſons in reputation for ſanctity then wrote to me. I received letters from Madamoiſelle *De Lamoignon*, and another young lady, who was ſo moved with my anſwer, that ſhe ſent me a hundred Piſtoles for our houſe, and let me know beſide, "that, when we wanted "money, I had only to write to her; and that "ſhe would ſend me all I could deſire." They talked in *Paris* of printing an account of the ſacrifice I had made, and inſerting in it the miracle of my ſudden recovery. I don't know what prevented it: But ſuch is the inconſtancy of the creature, that this journey, which drew upon me at that time ſo much applauſe, has ſerved for a pretext for the ſtrange condemnation which has ſince paſſed upon me.

CHAP. V.

MY near kinsfolks did not ſignify any eager deſire for my return. The firſt thing they propoſed to me, a month after my arrival at *Gex*, was not only to give up my Guardianſhip, but to make over all my eſtate to my children, and to reſerve an annuity to myſelf. This propoſition, coming from people who regarded nothing but their own intereſt, to ſome might have appeared very unpleaſing; but it was in no wiſe ſo to me. I had not any friend to adviſe with. I knew not any one whom I could conſult about the manner of executing the thing, as I was quite free and willing to do it. It appeared to me that I had now the means of accompliſhing the

the extreme desire I had of being conformable to JESUS CHRIST, poor, naked, and stript of all. They sent me an article to execute, which had been drawn under their inspection, and I innocently signed it, not perceiving some clauses which were inserted therein. It expressed that, when my children should die, I should inherit nothing of my own estate, but that it should devolve to my collateral kindred. There were many other things, which appeared to be equally to my disadvantage. Though what I had reserved to myself was sufficient to support me in this place; yet it was scarce enough to do so in some others. I then gave up my estate with more joy, for being thereby conformed to JESUS CHRIST, than they could have by it who asked it from me. It is what I have never repented of, nor had any uneasiness about. What pleasure to lose all and to quit every thing for GOD! The love of poverty, thus contracted, is the kingdom of tranquillity.

I FORGOT to mention that, towards the end of my miserable state of privation, when just ready to enter into newness of life, our Lord illuminated me so clearly to see that the exterior crosses came from him, that I could not harbour any resentment against the persons who procured me them. On the contrary, I felt the tenderness of compassion for them, and had more pain for those which I innocently caused to them, than for any which they had heaped upon me. I saw that these persons feared GOD, too much to oppress me as they did, had they known it. I saw his hand in it, and I felt the pain which they suffered, through the contrariety of their humours. It is hard to conceive the tenderness which GOD gave me

me for them, and the desire which I have had, with the utmost sincerity, to procure them every sort of advantage.

AFTER the accident which befell me, of the fall from the horse, from which I soon wonderfully recovered, the devil began to declare himself more openly mine enemy, to break loose and become outrageous. One night, when I least thought of it, something very monstrous and frightful presented itself. It seemed a kind of Face, which was seen by a glimmering blueish light*. I don't know whether the flame itself composed that horrible face or appearance; for it was so mixed and passed by so rapidly, that I could not discern it. My soul rested in its calm situation and assurance, and it appeared no more after that manner. As I rose at midnight to pray, I then heard frightful noises in my chamber, and after I had lain down they were still worse; my bed often shook for a quarter of an hour at a time, and the paper sashes were all burst. Every morning while this continued, they were found shattered and torn, yet I felt no fear. I rose and lighted my wax candle at a lamp which I kept in my chamber, because I had taken the office of *Sacristan*, or (*Vestry Nun*) and the care of waking the sisters at the hour they were to rise, without having once failed in it for my indispositions, ever being the first in all the observances: I made use of my little light to look all over the chamber, and at the sashes, at the very time the noise was strongest: As he saw that I was afraid

* Probably (says the translator) this was the contrivance of some evil minded persons to terrify her, perhaps the vile Ecclesiastic, whom she is just going to mention.

of nothing, he left off all on a ſudden, and attacked me no more in perſon: But he ſtirred up men againſt me, and that ſucceeded far better with him; for he found them diſpoſed to do what he prompted them to, zealouſly, in as much as they counted it a good thing to do me the worſt of injuries.

One of the ſiſters whom I had brought, a very beautiful girl, contracted an intimacy with an Eccleſiaſtic, who had authority in this place. At firſt he inſpired her with an averſion for me, being well aſſured that if ſhe placed any confidence in me, I ſhould adviſe her not to ſuffer his viſits ſo frequently.—She was undertaking a religious retreat. That Eccleſiaſtic was deſirous to induce her to make it, in order to gain her entire confidence which would have ſerved as a cloak to his frequent viſits. The Biſhop of *Geneva* had given Father *La Combe* for director to our houſe, and as he was going to cauſe retreats to be made, I deſired her to wait for him. As I had gained ſome ſhare in her eſteem, ſhe ſubmitted thereto, even againſt her inclination, which was to have made it under this Eccleſiaſtic.—I began to talk to her on the ſubject of inward prayer, and drew her into the practice of this duty. Our Lord gave ſuch a bleſſing thereto, that this girl, (one of good parts) gave herſelf to God in right earneſt, and with her whole heart: And the retreat compleatly won her over. She then became more reſerved, and on her guard, towards this Eccleſiaſtic, which exceedingly vexed him. It enraged him both againſt Father *La Combe* and me.—This proved the ſource of the perſecutions which afterward befel me.—The noiſe in my chamber ended as that commenced.

This

This Eccleſiaſtic, began to talk privately of me with much contempt. I knew it, but took no notice. There came a certain Friar to ſee him, who mortally hated Father *La Combe*, on account of his regularity. Theſe combined together to force me to quit the houſe, and to become maſters of it themſelves. All the means they could deviſe they ſtudied for that purpoſe.

My manner of life was ſuch, that in the houſe I did not meddle in affairs at all, leaving the ſiſters to diſpoſe of the temporals as they pleaſed. Soon after my entrance into it I received eighteen hundred livres, which a lady, a friend of mine, lent me to compleat our furniture, which I had repaid her at my late giving up of my eſtate. This ſum they received, as well as what I had before given them.—I ſometimes ſpoke a little to thoſe who retired thither to become Catholicks, and our Lord favoured with ſo much benediction what I ſaid to them, that ſome, whom they knew not before what to make of, became ſenſible ſolid women, and exemplary in piety.

I saw croſſes in abundance likely to fall to my lot. At the ſame time theſe words came into my mind, "Who for the joy that was ſet before him endured *the croſs*." Heb. xii. 2. I proſtrated myſelf for a long time with my face on the ground, earneſtly deſiring to receive all thy ſtrokes, Oh thou who ſpared not thy own ſon! Thou couldſt find none but him worthy of thee, and thou ſtill findeſt in him hearts proper for thee.

A few days after my arrival at *Gex*, I ſaw in a ſacred and myſterious dream (for as ſuch I very well diſtinguiſhed it) Father *La Combe* faſtened

up to an enormous croſs ſtripped, in like manner as they paint our Saviour. I ſaw round it a frightful croud, which covered me with confuſion, and threw back on me the ignominy of his puniſhment. He ſeemed to have moſt pain, but I more reproaches than he. I have ſince beheld this fully accompliſhed.

THE aforeſaid Eccleſiaſtic won over to his party one of our ſiſters who was the houſe-ſteward, and ſoon after the prioreſs. I was of a very delicate frame, but the good inclination which I had did not give ſtrength to my body. I had two maids of my own with me to ſerve me: Yet as the community had need of one of them for their cook, and the other to attend the door and other occaſions, I gave them up, not thinking but they would allow them to ſerve me ſometimes, and aſſiſt me in things I was not able to do myſelf; for beſides this, I let them ſtill receive all my income they having had already my firſt half of this years annuity: And yet they would not permit either of my maid-ſervants to do any thing for me. By my office of ſacriſtan I was obliged to ſweep the church which was large, and they would not let any one help me in it. I have ſeveral times fainted away over the broom, and have been forced to reſt myſelf in little corners quite ſpent. This obliged me to beg them, that they would ſuffer it ſometimes to be ſwept by ſome of the luſty country girls which were there, new catholicks, which at laſt they had the charity to conſent to. But what moſt embarraſſed me was that I never had waſhed, and was now obliged to waſh all the veſtry linen. I took one of my maids to help me becauſe in attempting it by myſelf, I had done up the linen moſt awkwardly. But theſe ſiſters pull-

ed

ed her by the arms out of my chamber, telling her ſhe ſhould do her own buſineſs. I let it quietly paſs, without making any objection to it. The other good ſiſter, that girl I juſt mentioned, grew more and more fervent, by the practice of prayer in her dedication of herſelf to the LORD, more and more tender in her ſympathy with me, which irritated this eccleſiaſtic; inſomuch that, after all his impotent attempts here, he went off to *Annecy*, in order to ſow diſcord, and to effect more miſchief to father *La Combe*.

CHAP. VI

HE went directly to the Biſhop of *Geneva*, who till then, had manifeſted much eſteem and kindneſs for me, and perſuaded him, "that it "would be proper to ſecure me to that houſe, "to oblige me to give up to it the annual income "I had reſerved to myſelf; and to engage me "thereto, by making me prioreſs." He had gained ſuch an aſcendant over the Biſhop, that the people in the country called him the *little Biſhop*. Wherefore he drew him to enter heartily, and with zeal into this propoſition, and to reſolve to bring it about whatever it ſhould coſt him.

THE Eccleſiaſtic, having ſo far carried his point, and being ſwelled with his ſucceſs in this firſt eſſay, no longer kept any meaſures in regard to me. He began with cauſing all the letters which I ſent, and thoſe which were directed to me, to be ſtopt; in order to have it in his power to make what impreſſions he pleaſed on the minds of others, and that I ſhould neither be able to

know it, nor defend myſelf, nor to give or ſend to my friends any account of the manner in which I was treated. One of the maids I had brought wanted to return, as ſhe could have no reſt in this place, and the other that remained was infirm, and too much taken up by others to help me in any thing. As Father *La Combe* was to come, I thought he would ſoften the violent ſpirit of this man, and that he would give me proper advice.

In the mean time they propoſed to me the engagement, and the poſt of prioreſs. I anſwered, "that as to the engagement it was impoſ-"ſible for me, ſince my vocation was elſe-"where. And I could not regularly be the "prioreſs, till after paſſing through the novi-"ciate, in which they had all ſerved two years "before their being engaged; that when I ſhould "have done as much I ſhould ſee how God "would inſpire me." The prioreſs replied pretty tartly, "that if I would ever leave them it were "beſt for me to do it immediately." Yet I did not offer to retire, but continued ſtill to act as uſual. However I ſaw the ſky gradually thickening, and ſtorms gathering on every ſide. The prioreſs then affected a milder air. She aſſured me, "that ſhe had a deſire, as well as I, to go "to *Geneva*; that I ſhould not engage, but on-"ly promiſe her to take her with me, if I went "thither." She pretended to place a great confidence in me, and profeſſed a high eſteem for me. As I am very free, and have nothing but uprightneſs, I let her know "that I had no at-"traction for the manner of life of the new ca-"tholicks, by reaſon of the intrigues from "without. Several things did not pleaſe me, becauſe

"becauſe I wanted them to be upright in eve-"ry thing." She ſignified, "that ſhe did not "conſent to ſuch things, but becauſe that Ec-"cleſiaſtic told her, they were neceſſary to give "the houſe a credit in diſtant parts, and to "draw charities from *Paris*." I anſwered, "that "if we walked uprightly God would never fail "us. He would ſooner do miracles for us." I remarked to her, "that when, inſtead of ſince-"rity, they had recourſe to artifice, charity grew "cold, and kept herſelf ſhut up. It is God alone "who inſpires charity: How then is it to be drawn "by diſguiſes?"

Soon after Father *La Combe* came about the retreats. (This was the third and laſt time that he came to *Gex*.) The prioreſs, after ſhe had been tampering a good deal with me hereupon, having wrote him a long letter before his coming, and received his anſwer, which ſhe ſhewed me, now went to aſk him whether ſhe would one day be united to me at *Geneva*. He anſwered with his uſual uprightneſs, "Our Lord has made "it known to me that you ſhall never be eſta-"bliſhed at *Geneva*." And ſoon after ſhe died. When he had uttered this declaration, ſhe appeared enraged againſt both him and me, after a ſurprizing manner. She went directly to that Eccleſiaſtic, who was in a chamber with the houſe-ſteward; and they took their meaſures together, to oblige me either to engage or retire. They thought that I would ſooner engage than retire, and they narrowly watched my letters.

He requeſted Father *La Combe*, which was only with a deſign to lay ſnares for him, to preach; which he did on this text, "The King's daugh-"ter

" ter is beautiful within." That Eccleſiaſtic, who was preſent with his confident, ſaid, " It " was preached againſt him, and was full of " errors." He drew up eight propoſitions, and inſerted in them what the other had not preached, adjuſting them as maliciouſly as ever he could, and ſent them to one of his friends at *Rome*, to get them examined by the ſacred congregation, and by the inquiſition. Though he had very ill digeſted them, at *Rome* they were pronounced good. That greatly diſappointed and vexed him. After having been treated in this manner, and opprobriouſly reviled by him in the moſt offenſive terms, the father, with much mildneſs and humility told him, " that he was going to *Annecy* " about ſome affairs of the convent; and that if " he had any thing to write to the Biſhop of *Ge-* " *neva*, he would take care of his letter." He deſired him then to wait a while, as he was going to write. The good father had the patience to wait above three hours, without hearing from him; though the other had treated him exceedingly ill, ſo far as to ſnatch out of his hands a letter I had given him for that worthy hermit I have mentioned. Hearing he was not gone, but was ſtill in the church, I went to him, and begged him to ſend to ſee if the other's packet was ready; becauſe the day was ſo far gone, that he would be obliged to lodge by the way. When the meſſenger arrived, he found a ſervant of the Eccleſiaſtic on horſeback, ordered to go full ſpeed, to be at *Annecy* before the father. He then returned an anſwer, " that he had no letters to " ſend by him." This was ſo contrived, that he might gain time to prepoſſeſs the Biſhop for his purpoſes. Father *La Combe* then ſet off for *Annecy*, and on his arrival found the Biſhop prepoſſeſſed,

ſeſſed, and in an ill humour. This was the ſubſtance of the diſcourſe which they had:

Biſhop. " You muſt abſolutely engage this la- " dy to give what ſhe has to the houſe at *Gex*, " and make her the prioreſs of it.

F. *La Combe.* " My Lord, you know what ſhe " has told you herſelf of her vocation, both at " *Paris* and in this country. I therefore do not " believe that ſhe will engage; nor is there any " likelihood that, after having quitted her all, in " the hope of entering *Geneva*, ſhe ſhould en- " gage elſewhere, and thereby put it out of her " power to accompliſh the deſigns of GOD in re- " gard to her. She has offered to ſtay with " thoſe ſiſters as a boarder. If they are willing " to keep her as ſuch, ſhe will remain with them, " if not, ſhe is reſolved to retire into ſome con- " vent, till GOD ſhall diſpoſe of her otherwiſe.

Biſhop. " I know all that; but I likewiſe " know that ſhe is ſo very obedient, that, if you " order her, ſhe will aſſuredly do it.

F. *La Combe.* " It is for that reaſon, my Lord, " that one ought to be very cautious in the com- " mands which they lay on her: Can I induce a " foreign lady, who, for all her ſubſiſtence, has " nothing but a ſmall pittance ſhe has reſerved " to herſelf, to give up that in favour of a " houſe which is not yet eſtabliſhed, and per- " haps never will? If the houſe happen to fail, " or be no longer of uſe, what ſhall that lady " live on? Shall ſhe go to the hoſpital? And in- " deed this houſe will not long be of any uſe,

ſince

" ſince there are no proteſtants in any part of " *France* near it.

Biſhop. " Theſe reaſons are good for nothing. " If you do not make her do what I have ſaid, I " will degrade and ſuſpend you."—This manner of ſpeaking ſomewhat ſurprized the father, who well enough underſtands the rules of ſuſpenſion, which is not executed on ſuch things. He replied,

" My Lord, I am ready, not only to ſuffer the " ſuſpenſion, but even death, rather than do any " thing againſt my conſcience."—Having ſaid that, he retired.

He directly ſent me this account by an expreſs, to the end that I might take proper meaſures thereon. I had no other courſe to take but to retire into a convent. I received a letter informing me that the Nun to whom I had entruſted my daughter was fallen ſick, and deſiring me to go to her for ſome time. I ſhewed this letter to the ſiſters of our houſe, telling them, " I had a " mind to go; but that if they ceaſed to perſe- " cute me, and would leave Father *La Combe* " in peace, I would return as ſoon as the miſtreſs " of my daughter ſhould be recovered." Inſtead of this, they perſecuted me more violently, wrote to *Paris* againſt me, ſtopt all my letters, and ſent libels againſt me round the country.

The day after my arrival at *Tonon*, Father *La Combe* ſet off for the valley of *Aouſt** to preach there

*Aoust, a Dutchy in *Piedmont*, at the foot of the *Alps*,

there in the Lent. He had come to take leave of me, and told me, " he ſhould go from thence " to *Rome*, and perhaps not return, as his ſupe- " riors might detain him there; that he was ſor- " ry to leave me in a ſtrange country, without " ſuccour, and perſecuted of every one." I replied, " My father, that gives me no pain, I " uſe the creatures for God, and by his order. " Through his mercy, I do very well with- " out them, when he withdraws them: And I " am very well content never to ſee you, if ſuch " is his will, and to abide under perſecution." He ſaid he went off well ſatisfied to ſee me in ſuch a diſpoſition, and then took his leave and departed.

As ſoon as I got to the *Urſulines*, a very aged and pious prieſt, who for twenty years paſt had not come out of his ſolitude came to find me. He told me, " that he had had a " viſion relative to me; that he had ſeen a " woman in a boat on the lake; and that " the Biſhop of *Geneva*, with ſome of his prieſts, " exerted all their efforts to ſink the boat ſhe " was in, and to drown her; that he conti- " nued in this viſion above two hours, with " pain of mind, that it ſeemed ſometimes as " if this woman were quite drowned, as for " ſome time ſhe quite diſappeared, but after- " wards ſhe appeared again, and ready to eſ- " cape the danger, while the Biſhop never " ceaſed to purſue her. This woman was al- " ways equally calm, but he never ſaw her en- " tirely free from him. From whence I con- clude

Alps, in the North-eaſt of *Italy*, 65 miles South-eaſt of *Geneva*, and ſubject to the king of *Sardinia*.

" clude, added he, that the Biſhop will perſe-
" cute you without intermiſſion."

* I had an intimate friend, wife of that gover-nor of whom I have made ſome mention. As ſhe ſaw I had quitted every thing for God, ſhe had a warm deſire to follow me. With diligence did ſhe diſpoſe of all her effects, and ſettle her affairs, in order to come to me: But when ſhe heard of the perſecution, ſhe was diſcouraged from coming to a place, from whence ſhe thought I ſhould be obliged to re-tire:—And ſoon after ſhe died.

CHAP. VII.

AFTER Father *La Combe* was gone, the perſecution raiſed againſt me became more violent. But the Biſhop of *Geneva* ſtill ſhewed me ſome civilities, as well to try whether he could prevail on me to do what he deſired, as to ſound how matters paſſed in *France*, and to prejudice the minds of the people there againſt me, always preventing me from receiving the letters ſent me. The Eccleſiaſtic and his family had twenty-two intercepted letters, opened, on their table. There was one wherein was ſent me a Letter of Attor-ney to ſign, of immediate conſequence. They were obliged to put it under another cover, and ſend it to me. The Biſhop writ to Father *La Motbe*, and had no difficulty to draw him into

* It appears, that ſhe was an inſtrument in the LORD's hand, in this place, *viz. Tonon*, of great ſpiri-tual benefit to ſeveral young women of the village, from what ſhe occaſionally mentions farther on, *viz.* in Chap. 18.

his

his party. For he was diſpleaſed with me on two accounts: Firſt, that I had not ſettled on him a penſion, as he expected, and as he told me very roughly ſeveral times: And ſecondly, that I did not take his advice in every thing; be-ſide ſome other intereſts he had in view. He at once declared againſt me. The Biſhop made him his confidant: And it was he who uttered and ſpread abroad the news about me, which they ſent him. They imagined, as was ſuppoſ-ed, that I ſhould annul the donation I had made, if I returned; that, having the ſupport of friends in *France*, I ſhould find the means of breaking it; but in that they were much miſtaken; for I had no thought of loving any thing but the po-verty of JESUS CHRIST. For ſome time yet the Father acted with caution towards me. He wrote me ſome letters; which he addreſſed to the Biſhop of *Geneva*, and they agreed ſo together, that he was the only perſon from whom I receiv-ed any letters, to which I returned very moving anſwers; yet he, inſtead of being touched with them, became only more irritated againſt me.

THE Biſhop continued to treat me with a ſhew of reſpect: And yet at the ſame time he wrote to many perſons at *Paris*, as did alſo the Siſters of the houſe to all thoſe perſons of piety who had wrote letters to me, to bias them as much as poſ-ſible againſt me, and to avoid the blame which ought naturally to fall upon them, for having ſo unworthily treated a perſon who had given up e-very thing, to devote herſelf to the ſervice of that dioceſe; for after I had done this, and was not in a condition to return to *France*, they treated me extremely ill in every reſpect. There was ſcarce any kind of falſe or fabulous ſtory, likely

to

to gain any credit, which they did not invent to cry me down. Beſide my having no way to make the truth known in *France*, our LORD inſpired me with a willingneſs to ſuffer every thing, without juſtifying myſelf; ſo that in my caſe nothing was heard but condemnation, without any vindication. It was not difficult indeed to do this to one who did not defend herſelf.

I WAS in this convent, and had ſeen Father *La Combe* no farther than I have mentioned; yet they did not ceaſe to publiſh, both of him and me, the moſt ſcandalous ſtories; as utterly falſe as any thing could be, for he was then a hundred and fifty Leagues from me.

For ſome time I was ignorant of this. As I knew that all my letters were kept from me, I ceaſed to wonder at receiving none. I lived in this houſe with my little daughter in a ſweet repoſe, which was a very great favour of Providence; for my daughter had forgot her *French*, and among the little girls from the mountains had contracted a wild look and diſagreeable manners. Her wit, ſenſe and judgment were indeed ſurprizing, and her diſpoſition exceedingly good. There were only ſome little fits of peeviſhneſs, which they had cauſed to riſe in her, through certain contrarities out of ſeaſon, careſſes ill applied, and for want of knowing the proper manner of education. But the LORD provided in regard to her, as I ſhall tell. During this time my mind was preſerved calm and reſigned to GOD. My ſilence was great; and for ſome time I had leiſure to taſte of and to enjoy the Divinity in my little cell: Afterwards that good Siſter almoſt continually interrupted me; and I anſwered every thing

thing ſhe deſired of me, both out of condeſcenſion, and from a principle which I had to obey like a child.

WHEN I was in my apartment, without any other director than our LORD by his ſpirit, however favoured therein, as ſoon as one of my little children came to knock at my door, he required me to admit the interruption. He ſhowed me that it is not the actions in themſelves which pleaſe him, but the conſtant ready obedience to every diſcovery of his will, even in the minuteſt things, with ſuch a ſuppleneſs, as not to ſtick to any thing, but ſtill to turn with him at every call. My ſoul was then, I thought like a leaf, or a feather, which the wind moves what way ſoever it pleaſes; and the LORD never ſuffers a ſoul ſo dependent on, and dedicated to him, to be deceived.

MOST part of men appear to me very unjuſt, who readily reſign themſelves to another man, and look upon that as prudence. They confide in men who are nothing, and boldly ſay, "Such "a perſon cannot be deceived:" And if one ſpeak of a ſoul wholly reſigned to GOD, which follows him faithfully, they cry aloud, "That "perſon is deceived with his reſignation." Oh my divine Love! Doſt thou want either ſtrength, fidelity, love, or wiſdom, to conduct thoſe who truſt in thee, and who are thy deareſt children? I have ſeen men bold enough to ſay, "Follow me, and you ſhall not be miſled." How ſadly are thoſe men miſled themſelves by their preſumption! And how much ſooner ſhould I go to him who would be afraid of miſleading me;

me; who truſting neither to his learning nor experience, would rely upon GOD only!

OUR LORD ſhewed me, in a dream, two ways by which ſouls ſteer their courſe, under the figure of two drops of water. The one appeared to me of an unparallelled beauty, brightneſs and purity; the other to have alſo a brightneſs, yet full of little fibres or ſtreaks; both good to quench thirſt; the former altogether pleaſant, but the latter not ſo perfectly agreeable. By the former is repreſented *the way of pure and naked Faith*, which pleaſes the Spouſe much, it is ſo pure, ſo clear from all *Self-love*. The way of openings or gifts is not ſo; and yet it is that in which many enlightened ſouls walk, and into which they had drawn Father *La Combe*. But GOD ſhewed me that he had given him to me, to draw him into one more pure and perfect. I ſpoke before the Siſters, he being preſent, of *the way of Faith*, how much more glorious it was to GOD, and advantageous for the ſoul, than all thoſe gifts, openings and aſſurances which ever cauſe us to live to ſelf. This diſcouraged them at firſt, and him alſo. I ſaw they were pained, as they have confeſſed to me ſince. I ſaid no more of it at that time. But as he is a perſon of great humility, he bid me unfold what I had wanted to ſay to him. I told him a part of my dream of the two drops of water; yet he did not then enter into what I ſaid, the time for it being not yet come: But when he came to *Gex*, to make the retreats, our LORD made known to me, as I was at prayer in the night, that I was *his Mother*, and he *my Son*. I told him the circumſtances of a certain time paſt; and he recollected that it was the time of ſo extraordi-

traordinary a touch with which the LORD favoured him, that he was quite overwhelmed with contrition. This gave him ſuch an interior renovation, that having retired to pray, in a very ardent frame of mind, he was filled with joy, and ſeized with a powerful emotion, which made him enter into what I had told him *of the way of Faith*. I give theſe things, as they happen to come to my remembrance, without carrying them on in order.

AFTER *Eaſter*, in the year 1682, the Biſhop came to *Tonon*. I had occaſion to ſpeak to him, which when I had done, our LORD ſo pointed my words that he appeared thoroughly convinced: But the perſons, who had influenced him before, returned to the charge. He then preſſed me very much to return to *Gex*, and to take the place of Prioreſs. I gave him the reaſons againſt it which I have mentioned before. I then appealed to him, as a Biſhop, deſiring him to take care to regard nothing but GOD in what he ſhould ſay to me. He was ſtruck into a kind of confuſion: And then ſaid to me, "Since you ſpeak to me "in ſuch a manner, I cannot adviſe you to it. "It is not for us to go contrary to our vocations; "but do good, I pray you, to this houſe." I promiſed him to do it; and having received my penſion, I ſent them a hundred Piſtoles, with a deſign of doing the ſame as long as I ſhould be in the dioceſe. The Biſhop ſaid to me farther, "I love Father *La Combe*. He is a true ſervant "of GOD: And he has told me many things to "which I was forced to aſſent; for I felt them "in myſelf: But *added he*, when I ſay ſo, they "tell me I am miſtaken, and that before the end "of ſix months he will run mad." He told me, he

" approved of the Nuns, which had been un-
" der the care and inſtruſtion of Father *La Combe*,
" finding them to come up fully to what he had
" heard of them." From thence I took occaſion to tell him " that in every thing he ought to re-
" fer himſelf to his own breaſt, or to the in-
" ſtructions there immediately received, and not
" to others." He agreed to what I ſaid, and acknowledged it to be right: And yet no ſooner was he returned than ſo great was his weakneſs that he re-entered into his former diſpoſitions. He ſent the ſame Eccleſiaſtic to tell me that I muſt engage myſelf at *Gex*; and that it was his ſentiment. I anſwered, that I was determined to follow the counſel he had given me, when he had ſpoken to me *as from* GOD, ſince now they made him ſpeak only *as man*.

CHAP. VIII.

MY ſoul was in a ſtate of entire reſignation, and very great content, in the midſt of ſuch violent tempeſts. Thoſe perſons came to tell me a hundred extravagant ſtories againſt Father *La Combe*. The more they ſaid to me to his diſadvantage, the more eſteem I felt for him. I anſwered them, " Perhaps I may never ſee him
" again; but I ſhall ever be glad to do him
" juſtice. It is not he who hinders me from en-
" gaging at *Gex*. It is only becauſe I know it to
" be none of my vocation." They aſked me, " Who could know that better than the Biſhop?" They farther told me " I was under a decep-
" tion, and my ſtate was good for nothing." This gave me no uneaſineſs, having referred to

to GOD the care of requiring, and of executing what he requires, and in whatever manner he demands it.

A SOUL in this ſtate ſeeks nothing for itſelf, but all for GOD. Some may ſay, " What then
" does this ſoul?" It leaves itſelf to be conducted by GOD's providences and creatures. Outwardly its life ſeems quite common; inwardly, it is wholly reſigned to the divine will. The more every thing appears adverſe, and even deſperate, the more calm it is, in ſpite of the annoyance and pain of the ſenſes and of the creatures, which, for ſome time after the new life, raiſe ſome clouds and obſtructions, as I have already ſignified. But when the ſoul is entirely paſſed into its original Being, all theſe things no more cauſe any ſeparation or partition. It finds no more of that impurity which came from ſelf-ſeeking, from a human manner of acting, from an unguarded word, from any warm emotion or eagerneſs, which cauſed ſuch a miſt, as it then could neither prevent nor remedy, having ſo often experienced its own efforts to be uſeleſs, and even hurtful, as they did nothing elſe but ſtill more and more defile it. There is in ſuch caſe no other way or means of remedy, but in waiting till *the ſun of righteouſneſs* diſſipate thoſe fogs, as the whole work of purification comes from GOD only. Afterwards this conduct becomes natural: And then the ſoul can ſay with the royal prophet, " Though an hoſt ſhould en-
" camp againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear:
" Though war ſhould riſe againſt me, in him
" will I confide." For then, though aſſaulted on every ſide by evil ſpirits, it continues fixed as a rock. Having no will but for what GOD ſees

meet to order, be it what it may, high or low, great or ſmall, ſweet or bitter, honour, wealth, life or any other object, what can ſhake its peace? It is true, our nature is ſo crafty that it worms itſelf through every thing; and *a ſelfiſh ſight* is like the baſiliſks; it deſtroys.

TRIALS are ſuited to the ſtate of the ſoul, whether conducted by lights, gifts, or extaſies &c. or by the entire deſtruction of ſelf in *the way of naked faith.* Both theſe ſtates are found in St. PAUL. He tells us, "And leſt I ſhould "be exalted above meaſure, through the abun- "dance of revelations, there was given to me a "thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buf- "fet me." He prayed thrice, and it was ſaid to him, "My grace is ſufficient for thee; for my "ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs." He proved alſo another ſtate when he thus expreſſed himſelf, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who "ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?" To which he replies, "I thank GOD, *it is done* "through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." It is he who conquers death in us through his own life. Then there is no longer a ſting in death, or thorn in the fleſh, capable of paining or hurting any more.

AT firſt indeed, and for a pretty long time after, the ſoul ſees that *nature* wants to take ſome part with it in its trials: And then its fidelity conſiſts in withholding it. without allowing it the leaſt indulgence, till it leave every thing to go on with GOD in purity as it comes from him. Till the ſoul be in this ſtate, it always ſul- lies, by its own mixture, the operation of GOD; like

like thoſe rivulets which contract the corruption of the places they paſs through; but, flowing in a pure place, they then remain in the purity of their ſource. Unleſs GOD through experience make known this guidance to the ſoul, it can never comprehend it.

OH if ſouls had courage enough to reſign themſelves to the work of purification, without having any weak and fooliſh pity on themſelves, what a noble, rapid and happy progreſs would they make! But few are willing to loſe the earth. If they advance ſome ſteps; as ſoon as the ſea is ruffled, they are dejected, they caſt anchor, and often deſiſt from the proſecution of the voyage. Such diſorders does ſelfiſh intereſt and *ſelf-love* occaſion. It is of conſequence not to look too much at one's own ſtate, not to loſe courage, not to afford any nouriſhment to *ſelf-love*, which is ſo deep-rooted, that its empire is not eaſily demoliſhed.—Often the idea which a man falſely conceives of the greatneſs of his advancement in divine experience makes him want it to be ſeen and known of men, and to wiſh to ſee the very ſame perfection in others. He conceives too low ideas of others, and too high of his own ſtate. Then it becomes a pain to him to converſe with people too human; whereas a ſoul truly mortified and reſigned would rather converſe with the worſt, by the order of Providence, than with the beſt, of its own choice; wanting only to ſee or to ſpeak to any as Providence directs, knowing well that all beſide, far from helping, only hurt it, or at leaſt prove very unfruitful to it.

WHAT then renders this ſoul ſo perfectly content? It neither knows, nor wants to know, any thing but what GOD calls it to. Herein it enjoys divine content, after a manner vaſt, immenſe, independent of exterior events; more ſatisfied in its humiliation, and in the oppoſition of all creatures, by the order of Providence, than on the throne of its own choice.

OH thou who alone conducteſt theſe ſouls, and who canſt teach ways ſo hidden and loſt, ſo contrary to *the uſual ſpirit of devotion*, which is full of itſelf and its own virtues;—bring hither ſouls innumerable, which may love thee in the utmoſt purity. Every other love, however vehement and ardent, is not the pure love, but a love mixed with ſelfiſhneſs. Theſe ſouls are the delight of GOD, *who delights to be with the children of men*, (Prov. 8. 31.) that is with ſouls child-like and innocent, ſuch as are ſet free from pride, aſcribing to themſelves only nothingneſs and ſin. They are one in GOD, to ſuch a degree, that they look at him only, and every thing elſe in him. Beautiful is that paſſage of JEREMIAH, "He ſitteth alone, and keepeth ſilence becauſe "he hath born his yoke upon him." (Lam. iii. 28.)

WHAT makes the perfection of one ſtate, is only the weak and imperfect beginning of that which follows it, as in the mounting up from a lower claſs to a higher. The child's ſtate has its beauties and charms in its ſeaſon, as have all the ſucceeding ſtages of the divine life, when rightly diſpoſed and directed. St PAUL ſays, *The Law was our School-maſter to bring us unto* CHRIST. (Gal. iii. 29.) But when we are come to

to him, that maſter is then rendered of no uſe. It is he who brings into *the perfect liberty of the Sons of* GOD, which liberty flows from the Spirit of GOD. But what are thoſe ſouls deſigned for, which are ſo dear to him? *To be conformed to the Image of his Son.* (Rom. viii. 29. 30.)

IT is here that the apoſtolic life begins.—But is every one called to that ſtate?—Very few, indeed, as far as I can comprehend; and, of the few that are called to it, fewer ſtill walk in true purity. There is a way of lights, gifts and graces, a holy life in which the creature appears all admirable: As this life is more apparent, ſo it is more eſteemed of ſuch at leaſt as have not the pureſt light. The ſouls which walk in the other path are often very little known; for a length of time, as it was with JESUS CHRIST himſelf, till the laſt years of his life. Oh if I could expreſs what I conceive of this ſtate! But I can only ſtammer about it,—I have wandered far from my ſtory, but am not capable of doing otherwiſe.

CHAP. IX.

BEING, as I have ſaid, with the *Urſulines* at *Tonon*, after having ſpoken to the Biſhop of *Geneva*, and ſeeing how he changed, juſt as others turned him, I wrote to him and to Father *La Mothe*; but all my pains were uſeleſs. The more I endeavoured to accomodate matters, the more the Eccleſiaſtic tried to confound them.—I ceaſed to meddle.

I HAD a dream that I drew a cord which ſeemed at firſt of diamond; but afterwards it appeared to be of iron. I ſaw ſtorms coming on every ſide; yet I reſted in a profound peace, wating for the ſtrokes which I could not avoid. I beheld the tempeſt deſcend impetuouſly, without my having done the leaſt thing to contribute to it, or ſeeing any thing for me to do but peaceably to ſuffer. One day I was told that the Eccleſiaſtic had won over the good girl whom I dearly loved. So ſtrong a deſire I had had for her perfection that it had coſt me much. I ſhould not have felt the death of a child ſo much as her loſs: At the ſame time I was told how to hinder it, but that human way of acting was repugnant to my inward ſenſe; and theſe words aroſe in my heart, *Except the* LORD *build the Houſe, &c.*

AND indeed he provided herein himſelf, hindering her from yielding to this deceitful man, after a manner to be admired, and very thwarting to the deſigns of him and his aſſociates. As long as I was with her ſhe ſtill ſeemed wavering and fearful: But oh the infinite goodneſs of GOD, to preſerve without our aid what without his we ſhould inevitably loſe!—I was no ſooner ſeparated from her, but ſhe became *immoveable*.

As for me, there ſcarce paſſed a day but they treated me with new inſults; their aſſaults came on me at unawares. The new Catholicks, by the inſtigation of the Biſhop of *Geneva*, the Eccleſiaſtic, and the ſiſters at *Gex*, ſtirred up all the perſons of piety againſt me. I had but little uneaſineſs on my account. If I could have had it on any, it would have been on that of Father *La Combe*, whom they vilely aſperſed, though he was

was abſent. They even made uſe of his abſence, to overſet all the good he had done in the country, by his miſſions and pious labours, which was inconceivably great. At firſt I was too ready to vindicate him, thinking it juſtice to do it. I did not do it at all for myſelf; and our LORD ſhewed me that I muſt ceaſe doing it for him, in order to leave him to be more thoroughly annihilated; becauſe from thence he would draw a greater glory, than ever he had done from his own reputation.

EVERY day they invented ſome new ſlander. No kind of ſtratagem, or malicious device in their power, did they omit. They came to ſurpriſe and enſnare me in my words; but GOD guarded me ſo well, that therein they only diſcovered their own malevolence. I had no conſolation from the creatures. She who had the care of my daughter behaved roughly to me. Such are the perſons who regulate themſelves only by their gifts and openings. When they don't ſee things preſently ſucceed, as they regard them only by their ſucceſs, and are not willing to have the affront of their pretenſions being thought uncertain, and liable to miſtake, they ſeek *without* for ſupports. As for me who pretended to nothing, I thought all ſucceeded well, inaſmuch as all tended to ſelf-annihilation. On another ſide, the maid I had brought, and who ſtayed with me, grew tired out. Wanting to go back again, ſhe ſtunned me with her complaints, thwarting and chiding me from morning till night, upbraiding me with what I had left, and coming to a place where I was good for nothing. I was obliged to bear all her ill-humours and the clamours of her tongue.

F. *La*

F. *La Mothe* wrote to me that I was a rebel to my Biſhop, ſtaying in his dioceſe, only to give him pain. Indeed, I ſaw there was nothing for me to do here, ſo long as the Biſhop ſhould be againſt me. I did what I could to gain his good will; but it was impoſſible on any other terms than the engagement he demanded, and that I knew to be my duty not to do. This, joined to the poor education of my daughter, affected my heart. When any glimmering of hope appeared, it ſoon vaniſhed; and I gained ſtrength from a ſort of deſpair.

DURING this time Father *La Combe* was at *Rome*, where he was received with ſo much honour, and his doctrine ſo highly eſteemed, that the ſacred congregation was pleaſed to take his *ſentiments* on ſome points of doctrine, which were found to be ſo juſt, and ſo clear, that it followed *them*. Mean while the ſiſter would take no care of my daughter, and when I took care of her, ſhe was diſpleaſed. I was not able, by any means to prevail on her to promiſe me to try to prevent her contracting bad habits. However I hoped that Father *La Combe*, at his return, would bring every thing into order, and renew my conſolation. Yet I left it all to GOD.

ABOUT July, 1682, my ſiſter, who was an *Urſuline*, got permiſſion to come to the waters. She brought a maid with her, which was very ſeaſonable.—My ſiſter aſſiſted in the education of my daughter, but ſhe had frequent jarring with her Tutreſs.—I laboured but in vain for peace.—By ſome inſtances which I met with in this place, I ſaw clearly that it is not great gifts which ſanctify, unleſs they be accompanied with a profound humility;

mility; and that death to every thing is infinitely more beneficial; for there was one who thought herſelf at the ſummit of perfection, but has diſcovered ſince, by the trials which have befallen her, that ſhe was yet very far from it. Oh my GOD, how true it is that we may have of thy gifts, and yet be very imperfect, and full of ourſelves!

How very ſtraight is the gate which leads to a life in GOD! how little and ſtript of every thing one muſt be to paſs throught it, it being nothing elſe but death to ourſelves! But when paſſed through it, what enlargements do we find! *David* ſaith, (Pſalm xviii. 19.) "He brought me "forth into a large place." And what is this but that infinite Being, in whom all other beings terminate? And it was through humiliation and abaſement that he was brought hither.

F. *La Combe*, on his arrival, came to ſee me. The firſt thing he ſaid was about his own weakneſs, and that I muſt return. He added, "that "all ſeemed dark, and no likelihood that GOD "would make uſe of me in this country." The Biſhop of *Geneva* wrote to Father *La Mothe* to get me to return, and he wrote to me accordingly to do it. The firſt *Lent* which I paſſed with the *Urſulines*, I had very great pains in my eyes; for that ſame impoſthume which I formerly had between the eye and the noſe, returned upon me thrice over. The bad air, and the chamber which I was in, too open to it, contributed hereto. My head was frightfully ſwelled, but great was my inward joy. It was a thing ſomewhat particular, to ſee many good creatures, who did not know me, love and pity me; and all the reſt enraged againſt me, and moſt of them on reports

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entirely falſe, neither knowing me, nor why they ſo hated me. To ſwell the ſtream of affliction yet more, my daughter fell ſick and was likely to die: There were but little hopes of her when her miſtreſs alſo fell ill. My ſoul, leaving all to GOD, continued to reſt in a quiet and peaceable habitation. O principal and ſole Object of my love! Were there never any other reward of what little ſervices we do, or of the marks of homage we render thee, than this fixed ſtate above the viciſſitudes in the world, is it not enough? The ſenſes indeed are ſometimes ready to ſtart aſide, and to run off like truants; but every trouble flies before the ſoul which is entirely ſubjected to GOD. By ſpeaking of a fixed ſtate, I don't mean one which can never decline or fall, that being only in Heaven. I call it fixed and permanent, compared with the ſtates which have preceded it, which were full of viciſſitudes and variations. I do not exclude a ſtate of ſuffering in the ſenſes, or ariſing from ſuperficial impurity, which remains to be done away, and which one may compare to gold *refined in its ſubſtance*, which yet may contract ſpots on the outſide. That gold has no more need to be purified in the fire, having undergone that operation; but needs only be cleanſed without. So it ſeemed to be with me at that time.

THERE is alſo a pain in this ſtate, which is inflicted of GOD. All the croſſes and troubles from without do no more to it than only graze the ſkin, when compared to this. The ſoul which is redeemed both from every reſiſtance of the divine Will, and from every ſelfiſh practice even of good, has nothing more to fear, or to ſuffer, from men or devils, though they diſcharge all their fury on it.

it. Againſt ſuch a ſoul indeed all hell is ſtirred up, and yet all that is little of a ſuffering to it. Nor could theſe have any power, *were it not given them from above*. JESUS CHRIST bore all the avenging juſtice of GOD: And it needed GOD to bear that weight. So it needs a ſoul transformed and paſſed into GOD, to bear the weight of the Father's juſtice. Such are the ſouls deſtined to be victims hereof, and *to fill up what is behind of the Sufferings of* CHRIST, *for his Body's ſake which is the Church*. (Col. 1. 24.) But what is there behind of his ſufferings, ſince he himſelf ſaid, "It is finiſhed," (John, xviii. 19.) except the extenſion thereof in his members? JESUS CHRIST, in the garden, ſuffered exceedingly, both from the withdrawing of GOD his Father, and from the weight of the ſins of all mankind: So, in his members, their unity with the will of GOD is ſo much the greater, as it is leſs perceived through the weight and force of their ſufferings.

CHAP. X.

MY daughter had the ſmall-pox and the purples. They ſent for a phyſician from *Geneva*, who gave her over. Father *La Combe* then came in to viſit and pray by her. He gave her his bleſſing; and ſoon after ſhe wonderfully recovered. The perſecutions of the new catholicks againſt me continued and increaſed: Yet, for all that, I did not fail to do them all the good in my power. My daughter's miſtreſs came often to converſe with me, but much imperfection appeared in her diſcourſes, though they were on religious ſubjects. Father *La Combe* regulated many things in regard to my daughter, which

which vexed her miſtreſs ſo much, that her former friendſhip was turned into coldneſs. She had *grace*, but ſuffered *nature* too frequently to prevail. I told her my thought on her faults, as I was inwardly directed to do: But though, at that time, GOD enlightened her to ſee the truth of what I ſaid, and ſhe has been more enlightened ſince; yet the return of her coldneſs towards me enſued upon it. The debates between her and my ſiſter grew more tart and violent. My daughter, who was only ſix years and a half old, by her little dexterities, found a way to pleaſe them both, chuſing to do her exerciſes twice over, firſt with the one, then with the other, which continued not long; for as her miſtreſs generally neglected her, doing things at one time, and leaving them at another, ſhe was reduced to learn only what my ſiſter and I taught her. Indeed the vivacity of my ſiſter was ſo exceſſive, that, without a particular grace, it was hard to ſuit one's ſelf to it: And yet ſhe appeared to me to ſurmount herſelf in many things. Formerly I could ſcarce bear her manners; but I have ſince loved every thing in GOD, who has given me a very great facility to bear the faults of my *neighbour*, with a readineſs to pleaſe and oblige every one, and ſuch a compaſſion for their calamities or diſtreſſes as I never had before.

MORE eaſily did I bear the great faults of imperfect ſouls, than very little ones in ſuch as GOD had begun to draw toward perfection. I feel my heart enlarged with tenderneſs towards the firſt, and a certain firmneſs in regard to the others, not to tolerate in them faults which are ſo much the more dangerous, as they leſs diſtruſt them on account of their ſubtilty. Though it ſeems that my

my miſeries ought to impoſe ſilence on me, I cannot forbear, without ſuffering much, to reprove thoſe ſouls for their defects. The more any ſoul is favoured with eminent grace, the more nearly is it united to me; the more violent alſo is the weight and ſuffering I feel for it, if it ſlip or turn aſide ever ſo little. I diſcern its foundation and its failings, as if they were outwardly ſhewen or ſet before me. I mean the inward failings of the mind, for others ſurpriſe me not. This view diminiſhes not the eſteem I have for *the perſons*; but it makes me know what they want, and obliges me often to tell it to them.

I HAVE no difficulty to uſe condeſcenſion with imperfect perſons; I ſhould be ſecretly ſmitten if I failed therein: But with ſouls of grace I cannot bear this human manner of acting, nor ſuffer long and frequent converſations. It is a caſe which few perſons are capable of, and which is ſcarce known. Some religious perſons ſay that theſe converſations are of great ſervice. I believe it may be true for ſome times, but not for all; for there is a period wherein it hurts, eſpecially when it is of our own choice; the human inclination corrupting every thing. The ſame things which would be profitable, when GOD, by his ſpirit, draws to them, become quite otherwiſe, when we of ourſelves enter into them. This appears to me ſo clear, that I prefer being a whole day with the worſt of perſons, in obedience to GOD, before being one hour with the beſt, only from choice and a human inclination.

THE order of divine providence makes the whole rule and conduct of a ſoul entirely devoted

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to GOD. While it faithfully gives itself up thereto, it will do all things right and well, and will have every thing it wants, without its own care; because GOD in whom it confides, makes it *every moment* do what he requires, and furnishes the occasions proper for it. GOD loves what is of his own order, and of his own will, not according to the idea of the merely rational or even enlightened man; for he hides these persons from the eyes of others, in order to preserve them in that hidden purity for himself.

BUT how comes it that such souls commit any faults; because they are not faithful, in giving themselves up to *the present moment*. Often too eagerly bent on something, or wanting to be over faithful, they slide into many faults, which they can neither foresee nor avoid.—Does GOD then leave souls which confide in him? Surely no. Sooner would he work a miracle to hinder them from falling, if they were resigned enough to him. They may be resigned as to the general will, and yet fail as to *the present moment*. Being out of the order of GOD, they fall. They renew such falls as long as they continue out of that divine order.—When they return into it, all goes right and well.

MOST assuredly if such souls were faithful enough, not to let any of *the moments of the order of* GOD slip over, they would not thus fall. This appears to me as clear as the day. As a dislocated bone out of the place in which the œconomy of divine wisdom had fixed it, gives continual pain till restored to its proper order.—so the many troubles in life, come from the soul not abiding in its

its place, and not being content with *the order of* GOD, and what is afforded therein *from moment to moment?* If men rightly knew this secret, they would all be fully content and satisfied. But alas! instead of being content with what they have, they are ever wishing for what they have not; while the soul, which enters into the divine light begins to be in paradise. What is it that makes paradise? It is *the order of* GOD, which renders all the saints infinitely content, though very unequal in glory!—From whence comes it that so many poor indigent persons are so contented, and that princes and potentates, who abound to profusion, are so wretched and unhappy? It is because the man who is not content with what he has, will never be without craving desires; and he who is the prey of an unsatisfied desire, can never be content.

ALL souls have more or less of strong and ardent desires, except those which are in *the divine moment*. Some have good desires, as to suffer martyrdom for GOD; others thirst for the salvation of their neighbour, and some pant to see GOD in glory. All this is excellent: But he who rests in *the divine moment*, though exempt from all these desires, is infinitely more content, and glorifies GOD more. The moment of suffering is the order of GOD, and the desire of what one has does not accompany the thing itself. It is written concerning JESUS CHRIST, when he drove out of the temple those who prophaned it, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." John ii. 17. It was *in that moment* of the order of GOD, that these words had their effect. How many times had JESUS CHRIST been in the temple without such a conduct? Does not he

occaſionally ſay of himſelf, that *his hour was not yet come?*

THE Saints in glory ever deſire, and ever poſſeſs GOD.—Yet this can hardly be called a deſire; it is rather an appetite, which the preſent good produces, and inſtead of being reſtleſs or painful, but augments the delight of enjoyment:—It is an energy or ſight of the ſpirit, that enjoys and advances inceſſantly in GOD, diſcovering ſtill new and tranſporting beauties in him.—Eternity can never exhauſt theſe infinite treaſures of that beauty, which is ever antient and new.—What they have once known, they know eternally, and yet every moment unfolds and diſcovers new ſcenes of wonder, and glory, and ever varying delights!——

THE tendency of the ſoul to its center is ſo ſtrong, that all the impetuoſity which we ſee in inanimate creatures, to return to theirs, are but faint ſhadows of this bent of the ſoul to its origin,—for the ſoul being highly ſuperior, is conſequently more powerful in its attraction. But GOD being infinite, his attraction is unſpeakable.

FROM this infinite attraction of GOD, as well as the bent of the ſoul to follow the draught of the central force, one may judge of the pain of thoſe ſouls, which are ſtopped in this violent bent, more or leſs, according as the obſtacles, which hinder them from becoming loſt in GOD, are more or leſs powerful; As alſo of the pain of ſouls in hell, a pain ſo much the greater as it is accompanied with the deſpair of ever being united to their center. The reaſon we do not feel in this life the ſtrong weight of our ſeparation from

from, or the force of this powerful attraction to our center, is becauſe of the body, which, amuſing itſelf with created objects, procures a diverſion, and takes away the attention of the ſoul from this attracting virtue of the center, till the inquietude of its ſeparation hinders it from finding any peaceful reſt on earth. Souls in purifying ſuffer no longer than till the fault or obſtruction is taken away—for then the pain ceaſes, and the degree of their ſuffering is juſt in proportion to the guilt or hindrance, which prevents their reunion. And after a fall, they ſuffer more or leſs, according to the quality of the fault.—But I wander immoderately.

End of the Year 1682.

CHAP. XI.

AFTER Father *La Combe* was returned from *Rome*, well approved, and furniſhed with teſtimonials of his life and doctrine, he performed his functions of preaching and confeſſing as uſual. To him I confeſſed; and he told me at firſt that I muſt return, as I have mentioned. I gave him an account of what I had done and ſuffered in his abſence, and what care GOD had taken of all my concerns. I ſaw his Providence inceſſantly extended to the very ſmalleſt things. After having been ſeveral months without any news of my papers, when ſome preſſed me to write, and blamed my neglect, an inviſible hand held me back; my peace and confidence were great herein. I received a letter from the Eccleſiaſtic at home, which informed me that he had orders to come and ſee me, and bring me my

papers. I had ſent for a pretty conſiderable bundle of things from *Paris* for my daughter. I heard they were loſt on the lake, and could learn no further tidings about them.

But I gave myſelf no trouble, I always thought they would be found. The man who had taken the charge of them made a ſearch after them a whole month, in all the environs, without hearing any news about them. At the end of three months they were brought to me, having been found in the houſe of a poor man, who had not opened them, nor knew who brought them thither. Once I had ſent for all the money which was to ſerve me a whole year; the perſon who had been to receive caſh for the bill of exchange, having put that money in two bags on horſe-backs, forgot that it was there, and gave the horſe to a little boy to lead. The money fell from the horſe in the middle of the market at *Geneva*. That inſtant I arrived, coming on the other ſide, and having alighted from my litter, the firſt thing I found was my money, in walking over it; what was ſurpriſing, a great throng was in this place, and not one had perceived it. Many ſuch things have attended me, which, to avoid prolixity, I paſs by. Theſe may ſuffice, to ſhew the continual protection of God.

The Biſhop of *Geneva* continued to perſecute me. When he wrote to me, it was with politeneſs and thanks for my charities at *Gex*: While at the ſame time he ſaid to others, "I gave no-"thing to that houſe." He wrote againſt me to the *Urſulines* with whom I lived, charging them to hinder me from having any conferences with Father

ther *La Combe, for fear of bad conſequences*. The ſuperior of the houſe, a man of merit, and the prioreſs, as well as the community, were ſo irritated at this, that they could not forbear teſtifying it to himſelf. He then excuſed himſelf with a pretended reſpect, ſaying, *I did not mean it that way*. They wrote to him, "that I did not ſee "the Father but at the confeſſional, and not in "conference; that they were ſo much edified by "me, as to think themſelves happy in having "me, and to eſteem it a great favour from God." What they ſaid out of pure charity was not pleaſing to the Biſhop, who, ſeeing they loved me in this houſe, ſaid, *that I won over every body to myſelf, and that he wiſhed I were out of the dioceſe*. Though I knew all this, and theſe good ſiſters were troubled at it, I could have no trouble by reaſon of the calm eſtabliſhment which I was in, the will of God rendering every thing equal to me; the creatures, however unreaſonable or paſſionate they appear, not being regarded in themſelves but in God; for an habitual faith cauſes every thing to be ſeen in God without diſtinction. Thus when I ſee poor ſouls ſo ruffled for diſcourſes in the air, ſo uneaſy for explanations, I pity them for their want of light. They have reaſons, I know which *ſelf-love* cauſes to appear very juſt.

To relieve myſelf, a little from the fatigue of continual converſation, as my body grew weak, I deſired Father *La Combe* to allow me a retreat, and to give out that he had ordered me to make one. He told the people ſo; but they could hardly leave me in repoſe. It was then that I let myſelf be conſumed by love all the day long. Then alſo I perceived the quality of a ſpiritual mother; for God gave me what I cannot expreſs

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for the perfection of ſouls. This I could not hide from Father *La Combe*. It ſeemed to me as if I entered into the inmoſt receſſes of his heart. Our Lord ſhewed me he was his ſervant, choſen amongſt a thouſand, ſingularly to honour him; but that he would lead him through total death, and the entire deſtruction *of the old man*; that he would have me contribute thereto, and be inſtrumental to cauſe him to walk in the way in which he had led me firſt; in order that I might be in a condition to direct others therein, and to tell them the tracks through which I have paſſed; that God would have us to be conformed, and to become both one in him; that though my ſoul was more advanced now, yet he ſhould one day paſs beyond it, with a bold and rapid flight. God knows how I rejoiced herein, and with what joy I would ſee my *children* ſurpaſs their *mother* in glory.

In this retreat I felt a ſtrong propenſity to write, but reſiſted it till I fell ſick. I had nothing to write about, not one idea to begin with. It was a divine impulſe, with ſuch a fulneſs of grace as was hard to contain, or bear, like mothers full of milk, which ſuffer much. I opened this diſpoſition of mine, to Father *La Combe*. He anſwered me "that he had a ſtrong impulſe to command "me to write but had not dared to do it yet, on "account of my weakneſs." I told him, "that "weakneſs was the effect of my reſiſtence, and "I believed it would, through my writing go off "again, "He aſked me, But what is it you will "write?" I replied, "I know nothing of it, nor "deſire to know, leaving it entirely to God to di-"rect me." He ordered me to do ſo. At my taking the pen I knew not the firſt word I ſhould write; but when I began, ſuitable matter flowed co-

copiouſly, nay impetuouſly; and as I was writing I was relieved and grew better. I wrote an entire treatiſe on the interior path of Faith, under the compariſon of torrents, or of ſtreams and rivers *, and though it is pretty long, the compariſon in it holds out to the end.

As the way, wherein God now conducted Father *La Combe*, was very different from that in which he had formerly walked; which had been all light, knowledge, ardor, aſſurance, ſentiments; but now the poor low deſpiſed path of faith, and of nakedneſs; he found it very hard to ſubmit thereto, which cauſed me no little ſuffering. Who could expreſs what it has coſt my heart before he was formed according to the will of God? The more this ſoul is precious in the eyes of God, the more dearly have I been obliged to pay for it. Mean time the poſſeſſion which God had of my ſoul became every day ſtronger, inſomuch that I paſſed whole days without being able to pronounce one word; for God was pleaſed to make me paſs wholly into him by an entire internal tranſformation †. He became more and more the abſolute maſter of my heart, to ſuch a degree as not to leave me a movement of my own, in order that I might be continually ſupple to every intimation of his will. This ſtate did not hinder me from condeſcending to my ſiſter, and the others in the houſe.

* This Treatiſe was written by her in 1683, entitled *The Torrents*. It has been twice printed in *Holland*, among her ſpiritual works, in the firſt Volume in 1704, and more correctly in the ſecond Volume in 1712.

† John, xvii. 21. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 17.

Nevertheleſs the uſeleſs things with which they were taken up could not ſuit my ſtate. That was what induced me to aſk leave to make a retreat, to let myſelf be poſſeſſed of him who holds me ſo cloſely united to himſelf after an ineffable manner. At this time he purified me from a relick of nature very ſubtil and delicate, ſo that my ſoul was brought into very great purity. All partitions were utterly conſumed. Then it was given me to write in a manner purely divine. All that I had wrote, before the time of my probation, was condemned to the fire. Our Lord united me more cloſely in his ſpirit with Father *La Combe*. He required me to tell him my thoughts, to the very leaſt of them, or to write them to him, as he was often abſent. It was a thing which I had never done before, when I might have done it more commodiouſly. I ſaid with the ſpouſe, (Cant. v. 3.) "I have put off "my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have "waſhed my feet how ſhall I defile them?" Muſt my ſpirit, which is ſo naked and empty, again be furniſhed and filled? And after having been ſubject to GOD only, muſt I become ſo to the creature? I could have wiſhed to avoid it, had I been miſtreſs of myſelf; but I was taken up with the thought till I had obeyed. Far from having its former purity, the heart became ſullied by ſuch thoughts, even though they were of good things: For to trouble the water with a ſtick of wood, or a ſtaff of gold, it ſtill muddies it alike. I found that the ſtronger the union grew between us, the more we were united to GOD, and drawn off from human ſentiments. I was the more conſtrained to forgive him nothing which was anüiſs, to deſire the thorough deſtruction thereof, that GOD only might reign; and was obliged

obliged to tell him faithfully whatever the Lord made known to me that he required of him:— And this was a hard place to paſs. I was conſtrained to tell him the eſſential defects of the ſiſter who took care of my daughter: As he was prepoſſeſſed in her favour, from her gifts and graces which ſhe had told him of, he rejected with diſpleaſure what I ſaid about her: But the Lord allowed me not to reſt till I told him all I thought of her, in regard to her faults. On every occaſion I was forced to ſuffer for his infidelity. Long has been the martyrdom I have ſuffered on this account, and beyond whatever can be expreſſed concerning it.

CHAP. XII.

OUR bleſſed LORD had fully determined that I ſhould enter into, and experience all his ſtates, beginning with the firſt, and going on even to the laſt. Reducing me even to a perfect child-like ſimplicity, he gave me ſuch a wonderful obedience to my director Father *La Combe*, that into whatever extremity of bodily illneſs I was plunged, I was immediately cured at his command. I ſeemed to be a repreſentative of JESUS CHRIST in his Childhood, obedient to his Father's will. Alſo a ſign and teſtimony to this good Father, who having been hitherto conducted by *teſtimonies* *, could not get out of that way. In all that was ſaid to him, and all that GOD cauſed him to experience, he was ever ſeeking for ſome

* *That is to ſay*, ſenſible Marks, perceptible Proofs, and evident Reaſons. *Editor's Note.*

ſome *teſtimonies*, reaſons or demonſtrations. It was the point wherein he had the moſt pain to die to himſelf, and by which he has cauſed me to ſuffer ſo much. Our LORD to make him enter the more readily into what he required both of him and of me, gave him the greateſt of all teſtimonies, which was this wonderful obedience; in order to make him ſee that it did not depend upon me, but that GOD gave it me for him: when he grew ſtrong enough to bear the loſs of every teſtimony, and GOD would have him learn to walk without ſuch helps, this obedience was taken from me in ſuch ſort, that without an immediate attention thereto, I could no longer obey him. This was ordered to make him enter the more into death to himſelf, and to deprive him of the ſupport of this teſtimony; for now all my efforts to revive it were uſeleſs. I was obliged to follow the internal dictates of my Sovereign. He gave me this repugnance to obey my external director; but it continued no longer than was neceſſary to make him loſe the ſupport he had drawn from thence, and perhaps I myſelf alſo.

I HAD at that time ſo ardent a deſire for his perfection, and to ſee him thoroughly die to himſelf, that I could have wiſhed him all the croſſes and afflictions, imaginable (far from pitying him in them) that might conduce to this great and bleſſed end. Whenever he was unfaithful, or looked at things in any other light than the true one, *viz.* to tend to this myſtic death, I felt myſelf on the rack, which, as I had till then been ſo indifferent, very much ſurpriſed me. To the Lord I made my complaint, who graciouſly encouraged me, both on this ſubject and on that entire dependence on himſelf

himſelf which he gave me, which was ſuch that I was like a new born infant.

MY ſiſter had brought me a maid*, whom GOD was willing to give me, to faſhion her according to his will, not without ſome crucifixion to myſelf, (for I believe it never is to fall out, that our Lord will give me any perſons without giving them wherewith to make me ſuffer for them) whether it be for the purpoſe of drawing them into a ſpiritual life, or never to leave me without the croſs. She was one on whom the Lord had conferred very ſingular graces. She was in high reputation in the country, where ſhe paſſed for a ſaint. Our Lord brought her to me, to let her ſee the difference between the ſanctity conceived and compriſed in thoſe gifts, with which ſhe was endowed, and that which is obtained by our entire deſtruction, even by the loſs of thoſe very gifts, and of all that raiſed us in the eſteem of men. Our Lord had given her the ſame dependence on me, as I had in regard to Father *La Combe*, nevertheleſs with ſome difference.

THIS girl fell grievouſly ſick. I was willing to give her all the aſſiſtance in my power, but I found I had nothing to do but to command her bodily ſickneſs, or the diſpoſition of her maid, and all that I ſaid was done. It was then that I learned what it was to command by the WORD, and to obey by the Word. It was JESUS CHRIST in me equally commanding and obeying. SHE,

* One of thoſe young women who was a priſoner in the *Baſtile*, at *Paris* twelve years, when Lady GUION was there. *Editor's Note.*

She, however, continued ſick for ſome time. One day, after dinner, I was moved to ſay to her, "Riſe and be no longer ſick." She roſe and was cured. The Nuns were very much aſtoniſhed; and as they knew nothing of what had paſſed, but ſaw her walking, who in the morning had appeared to be in the laſt extremity, they attributed her diſorder to vapours.

[*Here ſhe relates ſome other extraordinary matters, for which we refer the reader to the original French.*]

Thus are miracles operated by the annihilated ſoul, in ſuch ſort that as this ſoul is now become *nothing*, from hence nothing ought to be attributed to it. It does not ſay, when it feels an impulſe to heal, "be thou healed in the name of Jesus "Christ:" For that is a power of doing miracles in the Name of Christ: But here it is Christ himſelf who does the miracle, and who ſays by that perſon "Be healed,"—and it is done: Or "Let the devils be gone," and they are gone. When the Perſon ſays that, it is the divine word which ſpeaks, and effects what it ſpeaks; the Word which ſpoke in the beginning, and all things were made. Theſe don't make uſe of any form of prayers before it. They ſay what is given them to ſay. Jesus prayed publickly at the reſurrection of *Lazarus:* "But this," *he ſaid,* "I do be-"cauſe of the people who ſtand by, that they "may believe that thou haſt ſent me." Other ſervants of God, favoured with the gift of miracles, pray, and obtain thereby what they deſire: But here it is the Word who uſes his own authority, and who acts by the Perſon in whom he lives and reigns.

Two

Two things hereupon are to be obſerved. One is, that the ſouls of which I ſpeak don't generally do their miracles by giving any thing, or by ſimply touching; but it is by the Word, although they ſometimes accompany it with a touch. It is the All-powerful Word. The other is, that theſe miracles require the conſent, or at leaſt that there be no oppoſition, of the party on whom they are to be wrought. Our bleſſed Lord aſked thoſe good people whom he healed, "Are ye willing to be healed?" Could there be any doubt of it when the men came to him for that very purpoſe? Such is the great ſecret of the operation of the Word, and of the liberty of man. Tis not thus on the dead, or on inanimate creatures. He then ſpeaks, and it is done: But in the other caſe it requires the conſent of the ſoul.

I have at ſundry times experienced, and felt in myſelf, how much God reſpects the freedom of man, and even demands his free concurrence; for when I ſaid, "Be healed," *or*, "Be free "from your troubles;" if ſuch perſons acquieſced therein, the Word was efficacious, and they were healed. If they doubted, or reſiſted, though under fair pretexts, as ſaying, "I ſhall "be healed when it pleaſes God, I will not be "healed till he wills it;" or, in the way of deſpair, "I cannot be healed, I will not quit "my condition," then the word had no effect. I felt in myſelf, that the divine Virtue retired in me. I experienced what our Lord ſaid, when the woman afflicted with the iſſue of blood touched him, and he inſtantly aſked, "Who touched "me?" The apoſtles ſaid, "Maſter, the mul-

"titude

" titude throng thee, and preſs thee; and ſayeſt " thou, Who touched me?" But he replied, " It " is becauſe virtue hath gone out of me." (Luke viii. 45, 46.) JESUS CHRIST had cauſed that healing virtue to flow, through me, by means of his Word: But when that virtue met not with a correſpondence in the ſubject, I felt it ſuſpended in its ſource, which gave me ſome pain. I ſhould be, as it were, diſpleaſed with thoſe perſons: But when there was no reſiſtance, but a full acquieſcence, this divine virtue had its full effect. One cannot conceive the delicacy of this healing virtue. Although it has ſo much power over things inanimate, yet the leaſt thing in man either reſtrains it, or ſtops it entirely *.

THERE

* The language of infidelity boldly pronounces, *miracles are ceaſed*; as if either the omnipotence of GOD, or his benevolence to mankind were ceaſed. So formerly, when iniquity bore ſway, the people ſaid, " The " Lord hath forſaken the earth; the Lord ſeeth not." Ezek. ix. 9.

Among the firſt Chriſtians, we find, there were diverſities of gifts from the ſame ſpirit, *viz.* gifts of healing, working miracles, prophecy, diſcerning of ſpirits, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 9, 10. I have no doubt at all but if men at this day were ſufficiently purified, they would in like manner be eminently dignified. This I muſt ever believe on behalf of that infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, which *would have all men to be ſaved* from evil, *and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth.* I. Tim. ii. 4. The things which this divine *Truth* unfolds are ſuch as *the natural man receiveth not; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: Neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* I Cor. ii. 4.

M. GUION had been brought through the Deeps, and had paſſed through the Furnace of Purification. Who then can be competent Judges of *her* Words and Works

THERE was a good nun much afflicted, and under a violent temptation. She went to declare her caſe to a ſiſter whom ſhe thought very ſpiritual, and in a condition capable of aſſiſting her. But far from finding ſuccour here, ſhe was very much diſcouraged and caſt down. The other deſpiſed and repulſed her, treating her with contempt and rigour, ſaid " Don't come near me *, " ſince you are that way." This poor girl in a frightful diſtreſs came to me, thinking herſelf undone, on account of what the ſiſter had ſaid to her. I conſoled her and our Lord relieved her immediately; but I could not then forbear telling her, " that aſſuredly the other would be puniſhed, " and would fall into a ſtate worſe than hers." The Siſter who had uſed her in ſuch a manner came alſo to me, highly pleaſed with herſelf in what ſhe had done, ſaying, " ſhe abhorred ſuch " tempted creatures; that as for herſelf, ſhe was " proof againſt ſuch ſorts of temptations, and " that ſhe never had a bad thought." I ſaid to her " My Siſter from the friendſhip I have for you " I wiſh you the pain of her who ſpoke to you, " and even one ſtill more violent." She anſwered me haughtily, " If you were to aſk it from " GOD for me, and I aſk of him the contrary, I " believe I ſhall be heard at leaſt as ſoon as you." I anſwered her with great firmneſs, " If it be " only my own intereſts which I aſk, I ſhall not

Works, but ſuch as have followed CHRIST to the ſame Length and Depth? We have no other rule to judge of Pretenders and their Pretenſions by, but that which CHRIST has given, *viz. Ye ſhall know them by their fruits.* Mat. viii. 16.

* How raſh and unchriſtian it is to deride temptations.

" be

" be heard; but if it be thoſe of GOD only, and " yours too, I ſhall be heard ſooner than you are " aware." That very night ſhe fell into ſo violent a temptation that one equal to it has ſeldom been ſeen; ſhe continued in it a fortnight. It was then ſhe had ample occaſion, to acknowledge her own weakneſs, and what ſhe ſhould be without grace. She conceived at firſt a violent hatred for me, ſaying, *that I was the cauſe of her pain.* But as it ſerved her, as the clay did to enlighten him who had been born blind, ſhe ſaw very well what had brought on her ſo terrible a ſtate.

I FELL ſick, even to extremity. This ſickneſs proved a means to cover the great myſteries which it pleaſed GOD to operate in me. Scarce ever was a diſorder more extraordinary, or of longer continuance, in its exceſs. I was reduced to a ſtate of mere infancy, a ſtate which appeared only to thoſe who were capable of it. As for others, to them mine appeared only a natural or common caſe. I was put into a dependance on the Child JESUS, who was willing to communicate to me his own infant ſtate, that I ſhould bear him as ſuch. The more I advanced the more I was freed from this dependence, as children gradually riſe above ſuch dependence as they grow up. My fever ran ſo high as to a delirium. I had alſo an impoſthume at the corner of my eye very painful. At this time it broke entirely. They dreſſed it a long time, and probed it down to the bottom of my cheek. I had ſo burning a fever, and was ſo very weak, that it was obliged to be left to cloſe of itſelf without a cure; for my ematiated body was not able to bear theſe operations, without being on the very point of expiring, I ſuffered with great patience, like

like a child which ſcarce knows what one does to it. I then experienced the ſtrength of GOD joined to the weakneſs of a child. My natural diſpoſition was ſo remote from ſuch a deportment, that no leſs than a divine Power was ſufficient to bring me to it. Nevertheleſs, I gave myſelf up to be led thus; for my interior ſtate was ſo actuated of GOD, that I could not reſiſt him. His ſpirit was become the ſole maſter in me; and made me do, or ſubmit to, whatever he pleaſed; ſo that during this ſickneſs, my look was infantine, as thoſe about me obſerved. And yet our Lord gave me, with the weakneſſes of a child, ſuch a power over ſouls, that with a word I put them in pain, or in peace, as was neceſſary for their good. I ſaw that GOD made himſelf be obeyed, in and through me, like an abſolute Sovereign. I neither reſiſted him nor took part in any thing. I inwardly felt a candor of ſoul, inexpreſſible, and quite exempt from all guile. With this I was obliged to continue to tell my thoughts, or write them, to Father *La Combe*, and to help him according to the light which was given me. I was often ſo weak that I could not lift up my head to take nouriſhment; and when GOD required me to write to him, either to help and encourage him, or to lay before him what was made known to me, I had ſtrength given me to do it. When my letters were finiſhed, I found myſelf in the ſame weakneſs. Our Lord had given us both to underſtand that he would unite us by faith and by the croſs. Ours then has been a union of the croſs in every reſpect, as well by what I have made him ſuffer, as by what I have ſuffered for him. Thus it was reciprocal, and much ſtronger than I am able

to expreſs. The ſufferings which I have had on his account were ſuch as reduced me ſometimes to extremity, and continued for ſeveral years: For though I have been much more of my time far from him, than near him, that did not relieve my ſuffering, which laſted till he was perfectly emptied of ſelf, and to the very point of ſubmiſſion which GOD required of him. This operation made him ſuffer pains ſo much the more intenſe, as the deſigns of GOD upon him were the greater. He has occaſioned me cruel pains when I was near a hundred leagues from him. I felt his diſpoſition. If he was faithful in letting SELF be deſtroyed, I was in a ſtate of peace and enlargement; if he was unfaithful, in reflection or heſitation, I ſuffered till that was paſſed over. He had no need to write me an account of his ſtate, for I knew it; but when he did write, it proved to be ſuch as I had felt it. My heart had in it as it were a counterpart, or an echo, which told it all the diſpoſitions which he was in. In ſhort, to bear a ſoul, however diſtant the perſon may be, in all its different diſpoſitions, and to ſuffer for all its reſiſtances, is a thing very ſtrange and myſterious.

I WAS much ſurprized to comprehend by experience, that what GOD required of me in thus obliging me to tell my thoughts, was to perfect me in ſimplicity, to make me readily yield to whatever he manifeſted to be his will, and to make Father *La Combe* enter into the ſame ſtate: For whatever croſs it was to me thus to tell him all my thoughts, which often ſo much diſguſted him, as to make him deſiſt from ſerving me, as he told me; yet I never forbore on this

this account to tell him them: And he, through ſubmiſſion to divine grace, at length got over all theſe repugnances.

CHAP. XIII.

MY ſiſter was in no wiſe capable of comprehending my ſtate. She often took offence at it; yet was diſpleaſed when I concealed it from her ever ſo little, although it was ſo ſtrange to her; the depth and nature of it being ſuch, as many perſons more ſpiritual than ſhe, could not have been able to comprehend; ſo that in this ſickneſs I ſuffered much on all ſides. The exerciſes of pain, though great, were the leaſt. Thoſe on the part of the creature were much greater. My higheſt conſolations were in receiving the ſacrament, and ſometimes ſeeing Father *La Combe*. I had ſtrange interruptions and croſſes from my ſiſter, as alſo from that Nun, and from the maid who wanted to return home. I was obliged (whatever extremity I was in) to hear their differences, which they came to tell me one after another; and they were each of them angry with me, becauſe I would not enter into their party. They ſcarce allowed me any ſleep; for as the fever redoubled in the night, I could only get one hour's reſt. I wiſhed to ſleep a little in the day, but they would not let me, ſaying, *it was only to avoid ſpeaking to them*; ſo that I needed very great patience to bear with them. It continued thus for more than ſix months. I think that was partly the cauſe of my delirium which held two days. I ſtill had a noiſe in my head with a very ſevere head-ach. Yet I complained of nothing, but ſuffered chear-

fully as a child. Father *La Combe* ordered them to allow me a little repoſe, which they did for ſome days only, and ſoon began again.

I CANNOT expreſs the mercies which GOD ſhewed me in the time of this indiſpoſition, and the profound views of the future which he gave me. I ſaw the Devil in great wrath going to excite a violent perſecution againſt prayer, and againſt the perſons drawn into that holy exerciſe. I wrote an account of all this to Father *La Combe*; and, if he has not burned the letters, they will ſtill ſerve as proofs of the truth hereof. The Devil durſt not attack myſelf; he feared me too much. I was to him like a thunderbolt. I then comprehended what a power a ſoul has, which is entirely annihilated. Our Lord then let me ſee all that has come to paſs ſince that time, as my letters clearly manifeſt.

As I was thinking in myſelf what ſo great a dependence was, and ſo pure and intimate an union, I ſaw twice in a dream JESUS CHRIST, an infant of admirable beauty; and it ſeemed to me that he very cloſely united us, ſaying, "It is I "who unite thee to myſelf, and am willing that "we be both one." Another time he bade me ſee Father *La Combe*, who then kept himſelf at ſome diſtance from me through infidelity; and with great goodneſs he brought him back again, willing to help me in the ſtate of childhood, as I helped him in the ſtate of death. He had a very great charity for me. Treating me as a real child, he often ſaid to me, "When I am with "you, I ſeem to myſelf as if I was with a child." I was frequently reduced to extremity, and ſeemed on the point of death. I had, as it were, its ago-

agonies. For ſeveral hours I only breathed a long time aſunder. Then all on a ſudden I recovered. Death flattered me; for I had a great fondneſs for it; but it only appeared flying off. The father forbid me to rejoice at the proſpect of death. I immediately diſcovered that it was an imperfection, and did it no more; remaining afterwards in the utmoſt indifference about it. There paſſed ſo many extraordinary things in this ſickneſs, that it would be impoſſible for me to relate them. GOD inceſſantly wrought miracles to relieve me, and give me new ſtrength when I was at extremity. In my pains they treated me wrong. The remedies they gave me augmented them; but I could not make myſelf uneaſy about it. The ſiſters had much compaſſion for me; and all were concerned but myſelf.

SEVERAL times I ſaw in dreams Father *La-Mothe* raiſing perſecutions againſt me. Our Lord let me know that this would be the caſe, and that Father *La Combe* would forſake me in the time of perſecution. This I wrote to him, and it diſquieted him greatly; becauſe he thought his heart was united to the will of GOD, and too deſirous of ſerving me, to admit ſuch deſertion: And yet it has ſince been found quite true; though not with his will, but from neceſſity, having been himſelf perſecuted the firſt. He was now to preach during lent, and was ſo much followed, that people came five leagues, to paſs ſeveral days there for the benefit of his miniſtry. I heard he was ſo ſick that he was thought like to die, and prayed to the Lord to reſtore his health, and enable him to preach to the people, who were longing to hear him. My prayer was heard, and he ſoon recovered, and reſumed his pious labours.

DURING my extraordinary ſickneſs, the Lord gradually taught me that there was another manner of converſing among ſouls wholly his, than by ſpeech. Thou madeſt me conceive, oh divine word, that as thou art ever ſpeaking and operating in a ſoul, though therein thou appeareſt in profound ſilence; ſo there was alſo a way of communication in thy creatures, in an ineffable ſilence. I learned then a language which before had been unknown to me. I gradually perceived, when Father *La Combe* entered, that I could ſpeak no more; and that there was formed in my ſoul the ſame kind of ſilence towards him, as was formed in it in regard to GOD. I comprehended that GOD was willing to ſhew me that men might in this life learn the language of angels. I was gradually reduced to ſpeak to him only in ſilence. It was then that we underſtood each other in GOD, after a manner unutterable and all divine. Our hearts ſpoke to each other, communicating a grace which no words can expreſs. It was like a new country, both for him and for me, but ſo divine, that I cannot deſcribe it. At firſt this was done in a manner ſo perceptible, *that is to ſay*, GOD penetrated us with himſelf in a manner ſo pure and ſo ſweet, that we paſſed hours in this profound ſilence, always communicative, without being able to utter one word. It was in this that we learned, by our own experience, the operations of the heavenly word to reduce ſouls into unity with itſelf, and what purity one may arrive at in this life. It was given me to communicate this way to other good ſouls, but with this difference, that I did nothing but communicate to them the grace with which they were filled, while near me, in this ſacred ſilence, which infuſed into them an extraordinary ſtrength and grace; but I received no-

nothing from them: Whereas with Father *La-Combe* there was a flow and return of communication of grace, which he received from me, and I from him, in the greateſt purity.

IT was in this that I comprehended the ineffable commerce of the moſt holy Trinity to all the bleſſed; and how GOD, who communicates himſelf to them, forms in them a flux and reflux of his own divine communications; that the ſaints of the like degree or hierarchy return to each other theſe pure and bliſsful emanations, and further ſhed them on the inferior hierarchies, and that all are reduced into their firſt principle, from whence they flow. I ſaw that we were created to partake in this life the unſpeakable happineſs of the commerce of the celeſtial regions, and that it requires us to be very pure to receive GOD thus uninterruptedly, and to leave him to flow back into himſelf in that ſame purity. We muſt indeed be very pure to receive and to communicate the divine Word, and afterwards to diffuſe it by a flux and reflux of communication upon the other ſouls which GOD gives us. This is what fixes us in the divine unity, in which we are one in him from whom all is derived.

I SAW then this hierarchic order, and theſe reciprocal communications, among the ſaints and angels of the ſame rank; and how this efflux ſpreads over thoſe of inferior orders, and that with ſuch a plenitude, that they are all filled according to their degree. It is to render the ſoul capable of theſe communications, that it needs to be ſo thoroughly and radically purified; without which it would ever remain ſelfiſh, it would always ſave ſomething alive; and from thence re-

tard and wholly exclude them. Beſide, its capacity needs to be extended, which being extremely contracted and bounded by ſin, is not in a ſtate, but by the force of fire, and the ſtrokes of the hammer, to be capable of the eternal deſigns of GOD in its creation.

IT was ſhewn to me how this hierarchic order was even in this life, and that there are ſouls who communicate to an infinite number of other ſouls, without knowing it, to whom the grace of their perfection reaches; that this hierarchy will be preſerved through all eternity, and that thoſe who naturally communicate to each other will be in the like degree. It was then that I learned the ſecret of ſpiritual fruitfulneſs and maternity; how the holy ſpirit renders ſouls fruitful in himſelf, and that there would be given to me in this way a numberleſs offſpring as well known as unknown. All thoſe who are my true children are drawn in their minds at once to continue in ſilence when with me; and I have the like tendency to impart to them in ſilence what GOD gives me for them. In this ſilence I diſcover their wants and failings, and communicate to them in an abundant plenitude according to their neceſſities. When once they have taſted of this manner of communication, any other becomes burthenſome to them. As for me, when I make uſe of ſpeech or the pen with ſouls, I do it only on account of their weakneſs, and becauſe either they are not pure enough for the interior communication: or becauſe it is yet needful to uſe condeſcenſion, or for the regulation of outward affairs.

OUR LORD gave me to experience the ſame communion with the ſaints in heaven, as with thoſe

thoſe on earth: This is the way to be truly united to the ſaints in GOD. I felt theſe communications very inward and very powerful, eſpecially to thoſe with whom one has moſt of the relation of grace, and to whom one is to be moſt united in heaven. At firſt this was more ſenſible, becauſe our LORD was graciouſly pleaſed to inſtruct me by my experience. It is the way which he has always uſed toward me. He has enlightened me, not by illuſtrations, and concluſions reſulting from them; but in making me experience the things themſelves, he gave me the illumination thereon, and thus a clear ſight and ſenſe of what I had experienced. I comprehended alſo the maternity of the Holy Virgin, and after what manner we partake of it; and how the word of JESUS CHRIST is found very ſignally realized, when he ſays, (Matt. xii. 50.) "Whoſoever ſhall do the will "of my Father which is in heaven, the ſame "is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother." They are truly made mothers, producing him in other ſouls.

IT was in this ineffable ſilence, that I comprehended the manner in which JESUS CHRIST communicated himſelf to his moſt familiar friends; and the communication of St. JOHN, when leaning on his LORD's boſom at the ſupper of the paſſover. It was not the firſt time that he had ſeated himſelf that way; and it was becauſe he was moſt proper to receive theſe communications, being the diſciple of love. It was in that great banquet that JESUS CHRIST, as the WORD, flowed into JOHN, and diſcovered to him his profound myſteries, even how the eternal word operates. For the ſpeech of this word in ſilence

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is the moſt noble and ſublime of all operations. It was by this that he learned the difference between *being born of the fleſh, or of the will of man, and being born of* GOD. (John i. 13.) The operations of the fleſh are thoſe of carnal men; thoſe of the will of man are ſuch as are virtuous, being done from the good diſpoſition of the man: But thoſe which I am ſpeaking of are of the will of GOD, wherein man has no ſhare, except the ſubmiſſion or conſent which he gives thereto; which was the caſe of MARY, who ſaid, "Behold the "handmaid of the LORD, be it unto me accord-"ing to thy word." She gave her conſent, not only for herſelf, for the incarnation of the word in her, but for all who are regenerated in JESUS CHRIST, that the word ſhould be communicated to them; that, as *Eve*'s conſent to the Tempter had cauſed death to enter into all her children, ſo MARY's conſent to GOD might communicate the life of the word to all that are born of GOD.

IT is for this that JESUS CHRIST is *the way, the truth, and the life*; that he comes to *enlighten every man that cometh into the world:* He came to his own; and *to as many as received him he gave power to become ſons of* GOD: And to ſuch only is he known in his moſt intimate communications.

OH what admirable communications were thoſe which paſſed betwixt MARY and St. JOHN, at the foot of the Croſs! A filiation, or ſonſhip all divine; which the LORD is willing to extend down to me, all unworthy as I am thereof, and to

to communicate a mother's fruitfulneſs, affection and tenderneſs, even to this poor nothing! I mean the fruitfulneſs of hearts and ſpirits. Our LORD was willing, in order to inſtruct me to the bottom of this myſtery, in favour of others, that the girl (ſhe whom I have ſpoke of) ſhould have need of this ſuccour. I proved her every way; and when I was not willing that ſhe ſhould ſtay with me in ſilence, I ſaw her inward condition affected by it, and even her bodily ſtrength fail, till ſhe was juſt ready to faint away. When I had made a ſufficient number of trials hereof, to comprehend theſe manners of communications, her extreme neceſſities paſſed away. I began to diſcover, eſpecially with Father *La Combe*, that the interior communication was carried on, even when he was afar off, as well as when he was near. Sometimes our LORD made me ſtop ſhort, when in the midſt of my occupations; and I was favoured with ſuch a flow of grace as that which I felt when with him; which I have alſo experienced with many others, though not in a like degree; but more or leſs feeling their infidelities, and knowing their faults by inconceivable impreſſions, without ever having been miſtaken therein.

CHAP. XIV.

IN this long malady the love of GOD, and of him alone, made up my whole occupation. I ſeemed ſo entirely loſt in him, as to have no ſight of myſelf at all. It ſeemed as if my heart never came out of that divine ocean, having been drawn into it through deep humiliations. Oh loſs which is the conſummation of happineſs,

neſs, though operated through croſſes and through deaths!

JESUS, as an infant, was then all living in me; and I lived no more. I was then taught, oh my Love, that thy ſtate of infancy ſhould not be the only one which I muſt bear. Theſe words were imprinted in me, as a real ſtate into which I muſt enter, (Matt. viii. 20.) "The "foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have "neſts, but the ſon of man hath not where to "lay his head." This I have ſince experienced in all its extent, having no ſure abode, no refuge among my friends, who were aſhamed of me, and openly renounced me, when univerſally decried; nor among my relations, moſt of whom declared themſelves my adverſaries, and were my greateſt perſecutors; while others looked on me with contempt and indignation. My ſtate began to be like that of JOB. I might ſay with DAVID, (Pſal. xix. 7, 8.—xxii. 6.—xxxi 11.) "For thy ſake I have born reproach; ſhame "hath covered my face; I am become a ſtran-"ger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mo-"thers children: A reproach to men, and deſpiſ-"ed of the people."

ONE night when I was awake, CHRIST ſhewed me to myſelf, under the figure of the woman in the Revelations, (Rev. 12.) for as the brazen ſerpent repreſented CHRIST, tho' not really himſelf, ſo this figure ſhadowed out my ſtate. The moon was under her feet, a crown of thorns upon her head, and, ſurrounded with the ſun, being with-child, cried in the pangs of childbirth. He ſhowed hereby that my ſoul was above the viciſſitudes and inconſtancy of events; that I was covered and penetrated with the ſun of

of righteouſneſs; that the twelve ſtars were the fruits of this ſtate, and the gifts of GOD, as a crown on my head; that I was big with a fruit, which was the ſpirit which GOD would have me communicate to all my children; that the devil was the frightful dragon who would ſtrive to devour that fruit, and to make horrible ravages over all the earth round about me; but that GOD would preſerve this fruit, that it ſhould not be loſt; (So I truſt, in ſpite of the ſtorm, that all I have had to ſay or write will be preſerved,) that the devil in his rage, at not ſucceeding in his deſign againſt the fruit, would fall the more fiercely on myſelf, and would raiſe a flood againſt me to ſwallow me up; that this flood would be calumny, which would ruſh to carry me down with rapidity; but that the earth would open itſelf to receive this flood; that is to ſay, that this calumny would gradually fall to the ground, and there die away.

HE ſhowed me all the world in a rage againſt me, without any one daring to appear for me; and aſſured me in the ineffable ſilence of his eternal Word, that he would give me vaſt numbers of children, which I ſhould bring forth by the croſs. I left it to him to do with me whatever he pleaſed, eſteeming my whole and ſole intereſt to be placed, entirely in his divine Will. He gave me to ſee how the devil was going to ſtir up an outrageous perſecution againſt prayer, that it ſhould prove the ſource of the ſame prayer, or rather the means which GOD would make uſe of to eſtabliſh it. He gave me to ſee farther how he would guide me into the wilderneſs, where he would cauſe me to be nouriſhed for a time, and times, and half a time. The wings, which

which were to bear me thither, were the reſignation of my whole ſelf to his holy will, and the love of the ſame will. I think I am at preſent in that wilderneſs, ſeparated from the whole world in my impriſonment; and I ſee already accompliſhed in part what was then ſhown me. Can I ever expreſs the mercies which my GOD has beſtowed on me? No; they muſt ever remain in himſelf, being of a nature not to be deſcribed, by reaſon of their purity, and immenſity.

IN my ſickneſs I was often in all appearance at the point of death. I fell into convulſions from violent pains in my bowels, which laſted a long time with violence. Father *La Combe* adminiſtred the ſacrament to me, the Prioreſs of the *Urſulines* having deſired him to do it as their prieſt was then not at home. I was well ſatiſfied to die, as was he alſo in the expectation of my departure. For being united in GOD after a manner ſo pure, and ſo ſpiritual, death could not ſeparate us, but on the contrary would have more cloſely united us. Father *La Combe*, who was on his knees at my bed-ſide, remarking the change of my countenance, and how my eyes faded, ſeemed ready to give me up for dying; when GOD inſpired him to lift up his hands, and with a ſtrong voice, which was heard of thoſe who were in my chamber, at that time almoſt full, to command Death to relinquiſh. Inſtantly it ſeemed to be ſtopped: And thus GOD was pleaſed wonderfully to raiſe me up again; yet for a long time I continued extremely weak, during all which our LORD ſtill gave me new teſtimonies of his love. How many times was he pleaſed to make uſe of his ſervant to reſtore me to life, when I was almoſt on the very point of expir-

expiring! As they ſaw that my ſickneſſes and pains did not end, they judged that the air of the lake, on which the convent was ſituated, was very prejudicial to my conſtitution. They concluded that it would be neceſſary for me to remove.

DURING my ſad indiſpoſition, our LORD put it into the heart of Father *La Combe* to eſtabliſh an hoſpital in this place for the poor people ſeized with maladies, and to inſtitute alſo a committee or congregation of ladies of the charity, to furniſh ſuch as could not leave their families, to go to the hoſpital, with the means of ſubſiſtence during their illneſs, after the manner of *France*, there not having been yet any inſtitution of this kind in that country. Willingly did I enter into it; and without any other fund than Providence, and ſome uſeleſs chambers which the gentlemen of the town gave us, we began it. We dedicated it to the holy Child JESUS, and he was pleaſed to give the firſt beds to it from the earneſt-pence of my penſion, which belong to him. He gave ſuch a bleſſing thereto, that ſeveral other perſons joined us in this charity. In a ſhort time there were near twelve beds in it, and three perſons of great piety gave themſelves to this hoſpital to ſerve it, who, without any ſalary, conſecrated themſelves to the ſervice of the poor patients. I ſupplied them with ointments and medicines, which were freely given to ſuch of the poor people of the town as had need of them. Theſe good ladies were ſo hearty in the cauſe, that, through their charity, and the care of the young women, this hoſpital was very well maintained and ſerved. Theſe ladies joined together alſo in providing for the ſick, who could not go to the hoſpital: And I gave them ſome little

little regulations ſuch as I had obſerved when in *France*, which they continued to keep up with tenderneſs and love.

ALL theſe little things, which coſt but little, and which owed all their ſucceſs to the bleſſing which GOD gave them, drew upon us new perſecutions. The Biſhop of *Geneva* was offended with me more than ever, eſpecially in ſeeing that theſe ſmall matters rendered me beloved. He ſaid, "I won over every body." He openly declared, "that he could not bear me in his "dioceſe," though I had done therein nothing but good, or rather GOD by me. He extended the perſecution to thoſe good *religious women* who had been my aſſiſtants. The Prioreſs in particular had her own ſhare to bear, though it did not laſt long: For as I was obliged, on account of the air, to remove, after having been there about two years and a half, they were then more in peace and quietneſs. On another ſide my ſiſter was very weary of this houſe: And as the ſeaſon for the waters approached, they took occaſion from thence to ſend her away, with the maid which I brought with me, who had moleſted me exceedingly in my late illneſs. I only kept her whom Providence had ſent me by means of my ſiſter: And I have ever thought that GOD had ordered my ſiſter's journey hither, only to bring her to me, as one choſen of him and proper for the ſtate which it was his pleaſure to cauſe me to bear.

WHILE I was yet, indiſpoſed, with the *Urſulines*, the Biſhop of *Verceil*, earneſtly requeſted the father-general of the *Barnabites*, to ſeek among the Religious a man of merit, piety and learning,

learning, in whom he might place a confidence, and who might ſerve him for a prebend and a councellor. At firſt he caſt his eyes on Father *La Combe*; yet before he abſolutely engaged him with the ſaid biſhop, he wrote to him, to know, "whether he had any objection thereto." Father *La Combe* replied, "that he had no other will but "that of obeying him and that he might com-"mand him herein, as he ſhould think beſt in the "caſe." He gave me an account of this, and that we were going to be entirely ſeparated. I was glad to find that our Lord would employ him, under a Biſhop who knew him, and would be likely to do him juſtice. Yet it was ſome time before he went, matters not being all fixed.

CHAP. XV.

THEN went off from the *Urſulines*, and they ſought for a houſe for me at a diſtance from the Lake. There was but one to be found empty, which had the look of the greateſt poverty. It had no chimney but in the kitchen through which one was obliged to paſs to go to the chamber. I took my daughter with me, and gave up the largeſt chamber for her, and the maid who was to take care of her. I was lodged in a little hole, on ſtraw, to which I went up by a ladder. As we had no other furniture than our beds, which were quite plain and homely, I bought ſome ſtraw chairs and boſſes with dutch earthen and woden ware. Never did I enjoy a greater content than in this little hole, which appeared ſo very conformable to the ſtate of littleneſs of JESUS CHRIST: I fancied every thing better on wood than on plate. I laid in all my

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provisions, hoping to stay there a long time, but the Devil did not leave me long in such sweet peace. It would be difficult for me to tell the persecutions which were stirred up against me. They threw stones in at my windows, which fell at my feet. I had got my little garden put in order. They came in the night, tore it all up, broke down the arbour, and overturned every thing in it, as if it had been ravaged by soldiers. They came to abuse me at the door all night long, making such a racket as if they were going to break it open. These persons have since told who put them on such work. Though from time to time I continued my charities at *Gex*, I was not the less persecuted for it. They offered one person a * warrant to compell Father *La Combe* to stay at *Tonon*, thinking he would otherwise be a support to me in the persecution; but we prevented it. I knew not then the designs of GOD, and that he would soon draw me from that poor solitary place, in which I had enjoyed a sweet and solid satisfaction, notwithstanding the abuses from without. I thought myself happier here than any Sovereign on earth. It was for me like a *nest* and a *place of repose*: And CHRIST was willing that I should be like him. The Devil as I have said, irritated my persecutors. They sent to desire me to go out of the diocese. All the good which the Lord had caused me to do in it was condemned, more than the greatest crimes. Those crimes they tolerated, but me they could not endure. All this while I never had any uneasiness or repentance for my having left all, not that I was assured of having done the will of GOD therein:

* Lettre de Cachet.

therein: Such an assurance would have been too much for me. But I could neither see nor regard any thing, receiving every thing alike from the hand of my GOD, who directed and disposed these crosses for me either in justice or in mercy.

THE Marchioness of *Prunai*, sister of the chief secretary of state to his Royal Highness (the Duke of *Savoy)* and his prime minister, had sent an express from *Turin*, in the time of my illness, to invite me to come to reside with her; and to let me know that, "being so persecuted as I was in "this diocese, I should find an asylum with her; "that during that time things might grow bet-"ter; that when they should be well disposed "she would return with me, and join me with "a friend of mine from *Paris*, who was willing "also to come to labour there, according to the "will of GOD." I was not at that time in a condition to execute what she desired of me, and expected to continue with the *Ursulines* till things should change. She then wrote to me about it no more. This lady is one of extraordinary piety, who had quitted the splendor and noise of the court for the more silent satisfaction of a retired life, and to give herself up to GOD. With an eminent share of natural advantages, she has continued a widow twenty-two years; and has refused every offer of marriage, to consecrate herself to our Lord entirely and without any reserve. When she knew that I had been obliged to leave the *Ursulines*, yet without knowing any thing of the manner in which I had been treated, she procured a letter to oblige Father *La Combe* to go to pass some weeks at *Turin*, for her own benefit, and to bring me with him thither, where I should

find a refuge. All this ſhe did unknown to us; and, as ſhe has told us ſince, a ſuperior force moved her to do it, without knowing the cauſe thereof. If ſhe had deliberately reflected on it, being ſuch a prudent lady, ſhe probably would not have done it: For the perſecutions, which the Biſhop of *Geneva* procured us in that place, coſt her more than a little of humiliations. Our Lord permitted him to purſue me, after a ſurprizing manner, into all the places I have been in, without giving me any relaxation, though I never did him any harm; but on the contrary would have lain down my life for the good of his diocefe.

As this fell out without any deſign on our part, we, without any heſitation, believed it was the will of God; and thought it might be the means of his appointment to draw us out of the reproach and perſecution we laboured under, ſeeing myſelf chaſed on the one ſide, and deſired on the other; it was therefore concluded that Father *La Combe* ſhould conduct me to *Turin*, and that he ſhould go from thence to *Verceil*.

Beside him I took with me a religious man of merit, who had taught Theology for fourteen years paſt, in order to do things with the more decency, and to take away from our enemies all the ſubjects of ſlander. I alſo took with me a boy whom I had brought out of *France*, and who had learned the taylor's trade. They took horſes, and I hired a litter for my daughter, my chambermaid and myſelf: But all precautions are uſeleſs, when it pleaſes God to permit them to be fruſtrated. Our adverſaries immediately wrote off to *Paris*. A hundred ridiculous ſtories were circulated

circulated about this journey; comedies were acted on it, things invented at pleaſure, and as falſe as any in the world could be. It was Father *De La Mothe*, who was ſo active in uttering all this ſtuff. Had he believed it to be true, he ought out of charity to have concealed it; and much more, being ſo very falſe. They ſaid, "I "was gone all alone with Father *La Combe*, ſtroll-"ing about the country, from province to pro-"vince," with many ſuch fables, as weak and wicked as they were incoherent and badly put together. We ſuffered all with patience, without vindicating ourſelves, or making any complaint: And if things be coolly and impartially conſidered, could I do any better in the condition I was in? Was it not both honourable and of real advantage for me to be with a lady of ſuch quality and merit? Was it not ſufficient to cut off the courſe of malediction? Do diſorderly perſons chuſe houſes of that ſort? But paſſion has no eyes, and calumny is a torrent which drowns all reaſon.

Scarce were we arrived at *Turin*, but the Biſhop of *Geneva* wrote againſt us. As he could purſue us no other way, he did it by his letters. Father *La Combe*, repaired to *Verceil*, and I ſtaid at *Turin*, with the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*. But what croſſes was I aſſaulted with in my own family, from the Biſhop of *Geneva*, from the *Bernabites*, and from a vaſt number of perſons beſides! My eldeſt ſon came to find me out, on the death of my mother-in-law, which was an augmentation of my troubles; but after we had heard all his accounts of things, and how they had made ſales of all the moveables, choſen Guardians, and ſettled every article, without conſulting me at all, I ſeemed to be there entirely uſeleſs. It

was judged not proper for me to return, conſidering the rigour of the ſeaſon.

THE Marchioneſs of *Prunai*, who had been ſo warmly deſirous of my company, ſeeing my great croſſes and reproaches, looked coldly upon me. My child-like ſimplicity, which was the ſtate wherein at that time GOD kept me, paſſed with her for ſtupidity, though in that condition he inſpired me to utter oracles; for when the queſtion was to help any one, or about any thing which GOD required of me, he gave me, with the weakneſs of a child, which appeared in pure candour, the evident tokens of divine ſtrength. Her heart was quite ſhut up to me all the time I was there. Our Lord however made me foretell all that ſhould fall out, and which ſince that time has actually been fulfilled, as well to herſelf as to her daughter, and to the virtuous Eccleſiaſtic, who lived at her houſe. She did not fail, at laſt, to conceive more friendſhip for me, ſeeing then that CHRIST was in me. It was the force of ſelf-love, and fear of reproach, which had cloſed up her heart. Moreover ſhe thought her ſtate more advanced than in reality it was, by reaſon of her being without probations; but ſhe ſoon ſaw by experience that I had told her the truth. She was obliged for family reaſons to leave *Turin*, and go to live on her own eſtate. She ſolicited me to go with her; but the education of my daughter did not permit my compliance. To ſtay at *Turin* without her ſeemed improper, becauſe, having lived very retired in this place, I made no acquaintance in it. I knew not which way to turn. The Biſhop of *Verceil*, where Father *La Combe* was, moſt obligingly wrote to me, earneſtly entreating me to come thither, promiſing me

me his protection, and aſſuring me of his eſteem, adding, "that he ſhould look upon me as his "own ſiſter; that he wiſhed extremely to have "me there." It was his own ſiſter, a *religious* of the viſitation of *Turin*, one of my particular friends, who had wrote to him about me, as had alſo a French gentleman, an acquaintance of his. But a point of honour kept me from it. I would not have it ſaid that I had gone after Father *La Combe*, and that I had come to *Turin*, only for the purpoſe of going to *Verceil*. He had alſo his reputation to preſerve, which was the cauſe that he could not agree to my going thither, however importunate the Biſhop was for it. Had we believed it to be the will of GOD, we ſhould both of us have paſſed over theſe conſiderations. GOD kept us both in ſo great a dependence on his orders, that he did not let us foreknow them; but the *divine moment* of his Providence determined every thing. This proved of very great ſervice to Father *La Combe*, who had long walked in aſſurances, to die to them and to himſelf; for GOD by an effect of his goodneſs, that he might thus die without any reſerve, took them all away from him.

DURING the whole time of my reſidence at *Turin*, our Lord conferred on me very great favours. I found myſelf every day more transformed into him, and had continually more knowledge of the ſtate of ſouls, without ever being miſtaken or deceived therein, though ſome were willing to perſuade me to think the contrary. I had uſed my utmoſt endeavours to give myſelf other thoughts, which has coſt me not a little. For when I told, or wrote to Father *La Combe* about the ſtate of ſome ſouls, which appeared to him

more perfect and advanced than the knowledge given to me of them, he attributed it to pride; he was very angry with me, and prejudiced againſt my ſtate. I had no uneaſineſs on account of his eſteeming me the leſs, for I was not in a condition to reflect whether he eſteemed me or not. He could not reconcile (God ſo permitting it, to take from him every ſupport) an obedience to a miracle in moſt things, with ſo extraordinary a firmneſs, which in certain caſes he looked on as criminal. He admitted a diſtruſt of my grace; for he was not yet ſufficiently confirmed in his way, nor did he duly comprehend, that it did not in any wiſe depend on me, to be either one way or other; and that if I had any ſuch power, I ſhould have ſuited myſelf to what he ſaid, to ſpare myſelf the croſſes which that cauſed me; or at leaſt would have artfully diſſembled my real ſentiments. But I could do neither. Were all to periſh by it, I was in ſuch a manner conſtrained, that I could not forbear telling him the things, juſt as our Lord directed me to tell them to him. In this he has given me an inviolable fidelity to the very laſt. No croſſes or pains have ever made me fail a moment therein. Theſe things then, which appeared to him to be the ſtrong prejudice of a conceited opinion, ſet him at variance againſt me. And though he did not openly ſhew it, but on the contrary tried to conceal it from me, yet how far diſtant ſoever he were from me, I could not be ignorant of it; my ſpirit felt it, and that more or leſs, as the oppoſition was ſtronger or weaker; and as ſoon as it abated or ended, my pain, occaſioned thereby, ceaſed. He alſo on his ſide experienced the like. He has told me and wrote to me many times over, "When I "ſtand well with GOD, I find I am well with "you: When I am otherwiſe with him, I then "find myſelf to be ſo with you too." Thus he ſaw clearly that when GOD received him into his boſom, it was always in uniting him to me, as if he would accept of nothing from him but in this union.

WHILE he was at *Turin*, a widow who was a good ſervant of GOD, all in the brightneſs of ſenſibility, came to him to confeſs. She uttered wonderful things of her ſtate. I was then at the other ſide of the confeſſional. He told me, "He had "met with a ſoul given up to GOD, that it was "ſhe who was preſent, that he was very much e-"dified by her; that he was far from finding the "like in me; that I operated nothing but death "upon his ſoul." At firſt I rejoiced at his having met with ſuch a holy ſoul, as it ever gives me the higheſt joy to ſee my GOD glorified. As I was returning, the Lord ſhewed me clearly the ſtate of that ſoul, as only a beginning of devotion mixt with affection and a little ſilence, filled with a new ſenſation. This and more, as it was ſet before me, I was obliged to write to him upon it. On his firſt reading of my letter he diſcovered the ſtamp of truth in it; but ſoon after, letting in again his old reflections, he viewed all I wrote in the light of pride; for he ſtill had in his mind the ordinary rules of humility conceived and comprized after our manner. As to me, I let myſelf be led as a child, who ſays and does, without diſtinction, whatever it is made to ſay and do. I left myſelf to be led whereſoever my heavenly Father pleaſed, high or low; all was alike good to me.

HE wrote to me, that, at his firſt reading of my letter, there appeared in it ſomething of truth,

truth, but that on reading it over again, he found it to be full of pride, and of a preference of my own diſcernment to that of others. I knew the moment when he opened my letter, and entered into the truth of it. When the maid, by whom I ſent it, who was that maid which our Lord had brought me, was returned, I told her this; and ſhe aſſured me that it was the very time when he had read my letter. Sometime after he was more enlightened hereupon, and in regard to the ſtate I was in. He then ſaid to me, "Continue to be-"lieve as you have done; I encourage and ex-"hort you to do it." Upon which I began to reſpire, to recover new life and an enlargement of ſoul." Let nobody *(ſaid I to myſelf, as I was returning)* ſpeak to me any more of humility. The "ideas which people generally have of virtues "are not for me. There is nothing elſe for me "but that one thing, *viz.* ever ſingly to obey my "God." Some time after he ſufficiently diſcovered, by that perſon's manner of acting, that ſhe was very far from what he had thought of her. I give this only as one inſtance. I might give many others nearly like it; but this may ſuffice.

CHAP. XVI.

ONE night in a dream our Lord ſhewed me, that he would alſo purify the maid whom he had given me, and make her truly enter into death to herſelf. I then freely reſolved to ſuffer for her, as I did for Father *La Combe*. As ſhe reſiſted God much more than he, and was much more under the power of ſelf-love, ſhe had more to be purified from. For this maid I have born much,

much, during three whole years. Our Lord cauſed me inceſſantly to do miracles on her account. It ſeemed as if he gave me an abſolute power over both her body and ſoul. How much ſoever ſhe was indiſpoſed, as ſoon as I ſaid to her, "Be healed," ſhe was ſo: And for her pain, I bore the moſt of it. It ſeems as if our Lord had given me ſome ſhare of experience for her, of what he himſelf had ſuffered for men. Surely a ſmall part thereof would have conſumed ten thouſand worlds. He ſhewed me, in a dream, her reſiſtances, under the figure of ſundry animals, coming out of her body, whoſe outſides appeared pure, bright and tranſparent as glaſs, but all unclean within. Hereby I knew that ſhe had paſſed through the firſt purification, or cleanſing of the outſide, for which reaſon ſhe had paſſed in the world for a ſaint, but far from being inwardly purified. While on that account I ſuffered, I ſaw thoſe animals deſtroy one another, till there remained only one, which devoured all the reſt; yet itſelf appeared to have all the iniquity of the others in it. What I could not tolerate in her was her regard for *herſelf*. I ſaw clearly that the devil cannot hurt us, but ſo far as we retain ſome fondneſs for this corrupt *ſelf*. This ſight was from God, who gave me the diſcerning of ſpirits, which would ever accept what was from him, or reject what was not; and that not from any common methods of judging, not from any outward information, but by an inward principle which is his gift alone.

THAT this point be not miſtaken, it is needful to mention here that ſouls which are yet *in themſelves*, whatever degree of light and ardour they have attained, are unqualified for it. They often

ten think they have this diſcernment, when it is nothing elſe but ſympathy or antipathy of nature. Our Lord had deſtroyed in me every ſort of natural antipathy. The ſoul muſt be very pure, and depending on God alone, that all theſe things may be experienced in him. In proportion as this maid became inwardly purified my pain abated, till the Lord let me know her ſtate was going to be changed, which ſoon happily enſued. In compariſon of inward pains for ſouls, outward perſecutions, though ever ſo violent, ſcarce gave me any. The Biſhop of *Geneva* wrote to different kinds of perſons: He wrote in my favour to ſuch as he thought would ſhew me his letters, and quite the contrary in the letters which he thought I ſhould never ſee. It was ſo ordered that theſe perſons, having ſhewed each other their letters received from him, were ſtruck with indignation to ſee in him ſo ſhameful a duplicity. They ſent me thoſe letters that I might take proper precautions. I kept them two years, and then burnt them, not to hurt the prelate by them. The ſtrongeſt battery he raiſed againſt me was what he did with the ſecretary of ſtate, who held that poſt in conjunction with the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*'s brother. He uſed all imaginable endeavours to render me odious, and to cry me down. He employed certain Abbots for that purpoſe, inſomuch that, though I appeared very little abroad, I was well known by the deſcriptions this Biſhop had given of me. This did not make ſo much impreſſion as it would have done, if he had appeared in a better light at Court: Some letters of his, which her royal highneſs found, after the Prince's death, which he had wrote to him againſt her, had that effect on the Princeſs, that, (inſtead of taking any notice of what he now wrote againſt me)

me) ſhe ſhewed me great reſpect, and ſent her requeſt to me to come to ſee her. Accordingly I waited on her. She aſſured me of her protection, and that ſhe was glad of my being in her dominions.

* Our Lord diſcovered to me in a dream, that he called me, in order that I ſhoul *help my neighbour*. Of all the myſterious dreams I have had, there never was any which made more impreſſion on me than this, and whoſe unction of grace continued longer. It ſeemed to me that, being with one of my intimates, we went up a ſteep mountain, at the foot of which was a ſtormy ſea, full of dangerous ſhoals, which one muſt have croſſed before coming to this mountain, which was all covered with cypreſſes. When we had got up to the top of it, we there found another mountain incloſed with fragrant hedges all round, having a gate for entrance, which was locked. We knocked at it, but my companion deſcended back again, or ſtayed at the gate; for ſhe entered not with me. The maſter came and opened the gate to me, and immediately cloſed it again. Taking me by the hand, he led me into the wood, which was of cedars. This mountain was called *Lebanon*. In this wood there was a lodge, and in it two beds. Hither he brought me. I aſked him, "for whom are theſe?" He anſwered me, "One for my mother, and the other for thee, my "ſpouſe." In this chamber were animals naturally wild, and enemies to one another, all changed in their natures, all living together in a delightful and admirable concord; the cat and the bird, the wolf and the lamb, all ſporting together; all reſpectfully and joyfully ſaluted me. I

* In the year 1684.

re-

remembered hereupon the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, xi. 6, and the chamber mentioned in the *Canticles*, iii. 4. This place breathed nothing but candor and innocence. I perceived in it a boy of about twelve years of age. The Spouſe deſired him to ſee if there were any that had eſcaped from the ſhip-wreck. His ſervice was only to go to the foot of the mountain, to try if he could 'ſpy any one. The Spouſe turning to me ſaid, " I have " choſen thee, my ſpouſe, to bring hither with " thee all the perſons who ſhall have courage and " reſolution enough to embark on this ſea, and " to ſuffer ſhipwreck there." The boy returned and told him, " that he did not yet ſee any one " eſcaped from the ſhipwreck." Thereupon I awaked, much affected with this dream. The ſweet impreſſion it left on my ſpirit continued many days.

My interior ſtate grew ſtill more firm, and my heart ſo pure that not any imagination entered it, but ſuch as it pleaſed the Lord to raiſe. Mine was ſuch a ſtate as is beyond all the power of expreſſion to deſcribe, every motion of the creature ſo entirely loſt, that though outwardly it be free, inwardly it is not, even for the leaſt thing in the world; all its movements and actions being now in God, and under the dominion of his will, in entire union with him, the ſoul living in and of God, as the body lives in and of the air it breathes. This ſtate is known of God only. Such ſouls are, as to their exterior, only common, though precious in the ſight of God. Though they are the objects of his delight, they are often the Butt of the rage and ſcorn of the creatures.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

IT pleaſed God here to make uſe of me to the converſion of two or three Eccleſiaſticks. But I had much to ſuffer from their repugnances and many infidelities—one of whom had villified me greatly—and even after his converſion turned aſide into his old ways; but God at length graciouſly reſtored him.

Before his laſt return I ſaw (in a dream) a great number of very beautiful birds, which every one was purſuing with great emulation and eagerneſs to catch. I beheld them all without taking part therein, and without wiſhing to catch any of them. I was not a little ſurpriſed, to ſee that they all came to offer themſelves to me, without my uſing any effort to take them. Among them there was one of an extraordinary beauty, which far ſurpaſſed all the others. Every body was eager to get this: But it eſcaped them all, and me too as well as the reſt; but afterwards it returned to offer itſelf to me, when I no longer expected it. There was one of the others which after having come in the like manner, fluttered for a long time, one while offering itſelf, another while retiring, but at length gave itſelf up intirely. This laſt appeared to me to be the religious man I have been juſt ſpeaking of. Others fled quite away. But the beautiful bird, which had not any rival, *is not unknown to me, though he has not come yet. Be it either before or after my

* Perhaps Fenelon, Archbiſhop of Cambray.

my death, I am aſſured the time will come when he will wholly give himſelf up to GOD.

As I was with the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*. undetermined whether I ſhould place my daughter at the Viſitation of *Turin*, to go thither with her, or take ſome other courſe; I was exceedingly ſurpriſed, at a time I leaſt expected it, to ſee Father *La Combe* arrive from *Verceil*, and tell me, "I "muſt return to *Paris* without any delay." It was in the evening and, and he ſaid, "I muſt ſet "off next morning." I confeſs this ſudden news ſtartled me. It was for me a double ſacrifice, to return to a place where they had cried me down ſo much; and towards a family which held me in contempt, and who had repreſented my journey (cauſed by pure neceſſity) as a voluntary courſe, purſued through human attatchments. Behold me then diſpoſed to go off, without offering a ſingle word in reply, with my daughter and my chambermaid, without any body to guide and attend us; for Father *La Combe* was reſolved not to accompany me, not ſo much as in paſſing the mountains; becauſe the Biſhop of *Geneva* had writ on all ſides that I was gone to *Turin*, to run after him: But the father provincial, who was a man of quality, and well acquainted with the virtue of Father *La Combe*, told him, "that it "was improper and unſafe to venture on theſe "mountains, without ſome perſons of my ac-"quaintance; and the more as I had my little "daughter with me; and that he therefore or-"dered him to accompany me." Father *La Combe* confeſſed to me that he had ſome reluctance to do it, and that only obedience, and the danger to which I ſhould have been expoſed, made him ſurmount it. He was only to accompany me to

to *Grenoble*, and from thence to return to *Turin*. I went off then, deſigning for *Paris*, there to ſuffer whatever croſſes and trials it ſhould pleaſe GOD to inflict.

WHAT made me paſs by *Grenoble* was the deſire I had to ſpend two or three days with a lady, an eminent ſervant of GOD, and one of my friends. When I was there Father *La Combe* and that lady ſpoke to me not to go any farther; that GOD would glorify himſelf in me and by me in that place. He returned to *Verceil*, and I left myſelf to be conducted as a child by Providence. This lady took me to the houſe of a good widow, there not being accomodations at the inn; and as I was ordered to ſtop at *Grenoble*, at her houſe I reſided. I placed my daughter in a convent, and reſolved to employ all this time in reſigning myſelf to be poſſeſſed in ſolitude by Him who is the abſolute Sovereign of my ſoul. I made not any viſit in this place; no more had I in any of the others where I had ſojourned. But I was greatly ſurprized when, a few days after my arrival, there came to ſee me ſeveral perſons who made profeſſion of a ſingular devotion to GOD. I perceived immediately a gift which he had given me, both of diſcerning ſpirits and of adminiſtring to each that which ſuited their ſtates. I felt myſelf inveſted, all on a ſudden, with the apoſtolic ſtate, and diſcerned the conditions of the ſouls of ſuch perſons as ſpoke to me, and that with ſo much facility, that they were ſurpriſed at it, and ſaid one to another, "that I gave every one of them the very "thing they had ſtood in need of." It was thou O my GOD, who didſt all theſe things; ſome of them ſent others to me. It came to ſuch an exceſs, that, generally from ſix in the morning till

eight in the evening, I was taken up in ſpeaking of GOD. People flocked on all ſides, far and near, friars, prieſts, men of the world, maids, wives widows, all came one after another; and GOD ſupplied me with what was pertinent and ſatisfactory to them all, after a wonderful manner, without any ſhare of my ſtudy or meditation therein. Nothing was hid from me of their interior ſtate, and of what paſſed within them. Here, oh my GOD, thou made an infinite number of conqueſts known to thyſelf only. They were inſtantly furniſhed with a wonderful facility of prayer. GOD conferred on them his grace plentifully and wrought marvellous changes in them. The moſt advanced of theſe ſouls found, when with me, in ſilence a grace communicated to them which they could neither comprehend, nor ceaſe to admire. The others found an unction in my words, and that they operated in them what I ſaid to them. They ſaid, "they had never experienced any "thing like it." Friars of different orders, and prieſts of merit, came to ſee me, to whom our Lord granted very great favours, as indeed he did to all, without exception, who came in ſincerity.

ONE thing was ſurpriſing, which was, that I had not a ſyllable to ſay to ſuch as came only to watch my words, and to criticiſe on them. Even when I thought to try to ſpake to them, I felt that I could not, and that GOD would not have me do it. Some of them in return ſaid, "The peo-"ple are fools to go to ſee that lady. She cannot "ſpeak." Others of them treated me as if I were only a ſtupid ſimpleton. After they left me there came one and ſaid, "I could not get hither "ſoon enough to appriſe you not to ſpeak to "thoſe

"thoſe perſons; they come from ſuch and ſuch, "to try what they can catch from you to your "diſadvantage." "I anſwered them, Our Lord "has prevented your charity; for I was not able "to ſay one word to them."

I FELT that what I ſpoke flowed from the fountain, and that I was only the inſtrument of him who made me ſpeak. Amidſt this general applauſe, our Lord made me comprehend what the apoſtolic ſtate was, with which he had honoured me; that to give one's ſelf up to the help of ſouls, in the purity of his Spirit, was to expoſe one's ſelf to the moſt cruel perſecutions. Theſe very words were imprinted on my heart, "To "reſign ourſelves to ſerve our neighbour is to ſa-"crifice ourſelves to a gibbet. Such as now "proclaim, *Bleſſed is he who cometh in the Name "of the* Lord, will ſoon cry out, *Take away, cru-"cify.*" One of my friends ſpeaking of the general eſteem the people had for me, I ſaid to her, "Obſerve what I now tell you, that you will "hear curſes out of the ſame mouths which at "preſent pronounce bleſſings." Our Lord made me comprehend that I muſt be conformable to him in all his ſtates; and that, if he had cotinued in a private life with his parents, he never had been crucified; that, when he would reſign any of his ſervants to crucifixion, he employed ſuch in the miniſtry and ſervice of their neighbours. It is certain that all the ſouls employed herein by apoſtolic deſtination from GOD. and who are truly in the apoſtolic ſtate, are to ſuffer extremely. I ſpeak not of thoſe who put themſelves into it, who, not being called of GOD in a ſingular manner, and having nothing of the grace of the apoſtleſhip, have none of its croſſes; but of thoſe on-

ly who ſurrender themſelves to GOD without any reſerve, and who are willing with their whole hearts to be expoſed, for his ſake, to ſufferings without any mitigation. They muſt aſſuredly become *a ſpectacle to* GOD, *to angels*, and *to men*; *to* GOD, of glory, by their conformity to JESUS CHRIST; *to angels*, of joy; and *to men*, of cruelty and ignominy.

CHAP. XVIII.

AMONG ſo great a number of good ſouls, on whom our Lord wrought much by me, ſome were given me only as plants to cultivate. I knew their ſtate, but had not that near connection with, or authority over them, which I had over others. It was then that I comprehended the true maternity beyond what I had done before; for thoſe of the latter kind were given me as children, of whom ſome were faithful. I knew they would be ſo; and they were cloſely united to me in pure charity. Others were unfaithful; I knew that of theſe ſome would never return from their infidelity, and they were taken from me; ſome, after ſlipping aſide, were recovered. Both of them coſt me much diſtreſs and inward pain, when, for want of courage to die to themſelves, they gave up the point; and revolted from the good beginning they had been favoured with.

OUR Lord, amongſt ſuch multitudes as followed him on earth, had few true children. Wherefore he ſaid to his father, "Thoſe that thou gaveſt me "I have kept, and none of them is loſt but the "ſon of perdition." ſhewing hereby that he loſt not

not any beſide of his apoſtles, or diſciples, though they ſometimes made falſe ſteps.

AMONG the different numbers of friars who came to ſee me, there was one order which diſcovered the good effects of grace more than any other. Some of that very order had before this, in a little town where F. *La Combe*, was in the exerciſe of his miſſion, been actuated with a falſe zeal, and violent in perſecuting all the good ſouls which had ſincerely dedicated themſelves to GOD, plaguing them after ſuch a manner as can ſcarce be conceived, burning all their books which treated of ſilence and inward prayer, refuſing abſolution to ſuch as were in the practice of it, driving into conſternation, and almoſt into deſpair, ſuch as had formerly led wicked lives, but were now reformed, and preſerved in grace by means of prayer, becoming ſpotleſs and blameleſs in their conduct. Theſe friars had proceeded to ſuch an exceſs of wild zeal, as to raiſe a ſedition in that town, in which a father of the oratory, a perſon of diſtinction and merit, received ſtrokes with a ſtick in the open ſtreet, becauſe he prayed extempore in the evenings, and on Sundays made a ſhort fervent prayer, which inſenſibly habituated theſe good ſouls to the uſe and practice of the like.

I NEVER in all my life had ſo much conſolation as to ſee in this little town ſo many pious ſouls who with a heavenly emulation gave up their whole hearts to GOD. There were girls of twelve or thirteen years of age, who induſtriouſly followed their work almoſt all the day long, in ſilence, and in their employments enjoyed a communion with GOD, having acquired a fixed habit therein. As theſe girls were poor, they placed themſelves

two and two together, and ſuch as could do it read to the others who could not. One ſaw there the innocence of the primitive chriſtians revived. There was in that town a poor laundreſs who had five children, and a huſband paralytic, lame in the right arm, and yet worſe diſtempered in mind than in body. He had little ſtrength left for any thing elſe than to beat her: Yet this poor woman bore it with all the meekneſs and patience of an angel, while ſhe by her labour ſupported him and his five children. She had a wonderful gift of prayer, and amidſt her great ſuffering and extreme poverty, preſerved the preſence of GOD, and tranquility of mind. There was alſo a ſhopkeeper, and one who made locks, very much affected with GOD. Theſe were cloſe friends. Sometimes the one and ſometimes the other read to this laundreſs; and they were ſurpriſed to find that ſhe was inſtructed by the Lord himſelf in all they read to her, and ſpoke divinely of it.

THOSE friars ſent for this woman, and threatened her much if ſhe did not leave off prayer, telling her it was only for churchmen to pray, and that ſhe was very bold to practice it. She replied, (or rather he who inſtructed her, for ſhe was very ignorant of herſelf) "that CHRIST had "commanded all to pray, and that he had ſaid "*What I ſay unto you I ſay unto all.* Mark. xiii, "33. 37. without ſpecifying either prieſts or fri"ars; that without prayer ſhe could not ſupport "her croſſes and poverty; that formerly ſhe had "lived without it, and then was very wicked; "that ſince ſhe had been in the exerciſe of it, "ſhe had loved GOD with all her ſoul; ſo that to "leave off prayer was to renounce her ſalva"tion, which ſhe could not do." She added "that

"that they might take twenty perſons who had "never practiſed prayer, and twenty of thoſe "who were in the practiſe of it: Then, *ſaid ſhe*, "inform yourſelves of the lives of both ſorts, and "ye will ſee if ye have any reaſon to cry out a"gainſt prayer." Such words as theſe, from ſuch a woman, one would think might have fully convinced them; but (inſtead of that) they only irritated them the more. They aſſured her "ſhe "ſhould have no abſolution till ſhe promiſed "them to deſiſt from prayer." She ſaid, "It de"pended not on her, and that CHRIST is maſ"ter of what he communicates to his creatures, "and of doing with it what he pleaſes." They refuſed her abſolution; and after railing at a good taylor, who ſerved GOD with his whole heart, they ordered all the books without exception, which treated on prayer to be brought to them, and burned them with their own hands in the public ſquare. They were hugely elated with their performance: But all the town preſently aroſe in an uproar, on account of the late inſolent and intolerable uſage given to the father of the oratory. The principal men went to the Biſhop of *Geneva*, and complained to him of the ſcandals of theſe new miſſionaries, ſo different from the others. Speaking of Father *La Combe*, who had been there before them on his miſſion, they ſaid "theſe "ſeemed as if they were ſent to deſtroy all the "good he had done." The Biſhop was forced to come himſelf to that town, and there to mount the pulpit, proteſting he had no ſhare in it, and that theſe fathers had puſhed their zeal too far. The friars, on the other ſide declared, *they had done all they did, purſuant to the orders given them.*

THERE were alſo at *Tonon* young women who had retired together, being poor villagers, the better

to earn their livelihood and to ſerve GOD. One of them read from time to time, while the others were at work, and not one went out without aſking leave of the eldeſt. They wove ribbands, or ſpun, and the ſtrong ſupporting the weak. They ſeparated theſe poor girls, and others beſide them, in ſeveral villages, and drove them out of the church.

IT was then the friars of this very order whom our Lord made uſe of to eſtabliſh prayer in I know not how many places. And, into the places where they went, they carried a hundred times more books of prayer than thoſe which their brethren had burned. The hand of GOD appeared to me wonderfully in theſe things. I had then occaſion to know theſe friars in the way I am going to tell.

ONE day that I was ſick, a brother, who has ſkill in diſeaſes, and is uſeful therein, being come for a charitable collection, and hearing I was ill, came in to me, and gave me medicines proper for my diſorder. We entered into a converſation which revived in him the love he had for GOD, which he acknowledged had been too much ſtifled by his great occupations. I made him comprehend that there was no employments which ſhould hinder him from loving GOD, and from being occupied within himſelf. He readily believed me, as he already had a good ſhare of piety, and of an interior diſpoſition. Our Lord conferred on him many favours, and gave him to be one of my true children. What is wonderful is, that all thoſe whom he has given me are brought forth by me on the croſs, in which ſenſe he cauſes me *to fill up that which is behind of his paſſion:* (Col.

(Col. i. 24.) Oh goodneſs of GOD thus to aſſociate poor creatures to his great myſteries!

WHEN our Lord gives me children after this manner, he gives them a very particular affection for me. They cannot forbear calling me their mother; which has been the caſe of many, and ſome of great note. Several whom I did not know but by their letters, have ſeen me in dreams reſolving all their difficulties. I have found that when our Lord honours *a ſoul* with ſpiritual fruitfulneſs, he gives *it* what is neceſſary to nouriſh and ſupport *its* children, according to their different degrees. I was ſometimes ſo filled with theſe divine communications that I have been ready to cry out, "Oh, my Lord give me hearts to relieve "myſelf of my fulneſs." When ſome of my children came to me, or new ones were given me, in whom grace was already ſtrong, I was eaſed and comforted; they alſo felt an inconceivable plenitude of grace, and a greater gift of prayer, each according to their degree; which ſurpriſed them greatly at the firſt, and made them, when neceſſity ſeparated me from them, feel a great want of me. But afterwards they experimentally comprehended this myſtery; and when neceſſity ſeparated me from them, or I did not know them, having never ſeen them, inſtructions and conſolations were communicated to them even afar off.

CHAP. XIX.

THERE were there ſome good young women, who were particularly given me, and eſpecially one who had felt a very great attraction to come to me: And our Lord gave her by

by me all ſhe had need of; but when at a diſtance from me, ſhe was ſtrongly tempted, and then afraid to return to me; yet when ſhe took courage and came, her pains and fears were all diſſipated, and ſhe experienced, while ſhe was with me, that fulneſs of grace which is come by JESUS CHRIST: Yet after this ſhe was tempted ſo far as to imagine me to be a ſorcereſs: And that it was thereby, that I had driven away from her the evil ſpirit which had aſſaulted her, and that I had foretold her what would befall her, which actually did happen accordingly. Under ſuch an impreſſion on her mind ſhe came to me, but opened not her lips. I knew her uneaſineſs, told her of it, and ſhe confeſſed it. When we were at church, I ſaid to her, "If it is an evil "ſpirit which cauſes me to act towards you, let "him continue to torment you; if it be a good "ſpirit I pray that during the ſervice you may "partake of that ſpirit." At the very beginning of the ſervice her ſoul flowed with a peace of paradiſe, and was in ſo great an union with GOD, that ſhe ſcarce knew whether ſhe was in earth or in Heaven. After that manner was our communion, and then ſhe ſaid in herſelf; "Oh, how certain "I am now that it is GOD who moves and guides "her! After prayers was over, ſhe ſaid to me "Oh "my mother, how fully ſenſible have I been that "GOD is all in all in you! I have been in para-"diſe."

WHEN at any time after this ſhe made ſlips, and concealed them from me, or covered them with diſguiſes, I felt it at firſt; and that our Lord who loves and accepts of nothing but pure ſincerity, rejected her therein. I ſaw or rather experienced, how GOD rejects ſinners from his boſom. All

All the cauſe of GOD's rejection is in the *will* and inclination of the ſinner. If that *will* ceaſes, how horrible ſoever he be, GOD purifies him in his love, and receives him into his grace; but while that *will* remains, the rejection continues; though for want of ability ſeconding his inclination, he ſhould not commit the ſin he is inclined to, yet he never can be admitted into grace till the cauſe ceaſes, which is this wrong *will*, rebellious to the divine law. If that once ceaſes, GOD then totally removes the effects of ſin, which ſtain the ſoul, by waſhing away the new defilements which he has contracted. If that ſinner dies in the time that his *will* is rebellious and turned towards ſin, as death fixes for ever the diſpoſition of the ſoul, and the cauſe of its impurity is ever ſubſiſting, ſuch ſoul can never be received into GOD; its rejection muſt be eternal, as there is ſuch an abſolute oppoſition betwixt eſſential purity and eſſential impurity. And as this ſoul, from its own nature neceſſarily tends to its own centre, it is continually rejected from thence, by reaſon of its impurity, ſubſiſting not only in the effects but in their cauſe. It is the ſame way in this life. This cauſe, ſo long as it ſubſiſts, abſolutely hinders the grace of GOD from operating in the ſoul. But if the ſinner comes to die truly penitent, then the cauſe, which is the wrong *will*, being taken away, there remains only the effect or impurity cauſed by it. He is then in a condition to be purified. GOD of his infinite mercy has provided a laver of love and of juſtice, a painful laver indeed, to purify this ſoul. And as the defilement is greater or leſs, ſo is the pain; but when the cauſe is utterly taken away, the pain entirely ceaſes. Now, I ſay, it is the very ſame here. Souls are received into grace, as ſoon as the cauſe of ſin ceaſes; but they do not paſs into to

to GOD himſelf, till all its effects are waſhed away. If they have not courage to let him, in his own way and will, thoroughly cleanſe and purify them, they never enter into the pure divinity in this life. As this purification, is not effected but by pain, and the deſtruction of all the ſelfiſh wiſdom and deſires. This is the cauſe, why many pious ſouls, highly applauded of men, have ſtill need of farther purification. Thoſe who have not come ſo far as to be quite fixed in the pure love of GOD, are ever liable to change, and to tranſgreſs in ſome points in the will, or natural inclination, till they be dead to themſelves, and paſſed into GOD, who renders the *will* in this ſtate immutable; all that nature, that leaven which may be ever making it riſe again, which is *ſelf-love* in its many forms, ſome of them ſeeming both lawful and commendable in the ſight of men, being thoroughly purged away, which GOD is very willing to do for us in this life: But this is not effected but by ſevere and extreme pains to us, and the loſs of every ſupport of artful corrupt *ſelf*. Hence the ſouls truly changed into his image, are more rare than I can ſet forth or expreſs.

To return to my ſubject, I experienced that this young woman ſtuck to me ſtill by a certain ſecret tie, as a ſinner does to his GOD, from whence he may ſtill be received in him, when the cauſe of the rejection ceaſes. GOD inceſſantly ſolicits this *will* to ceaſe to be rebellious, and ſpares nothing on his ſide for this good end. The *will* is free, yet grace follows it ſtill. As ſoon as the *will* ceaſes to rebel, it finds grace at the door, ready to introduce its unſpeakable benefits. Oh the goodneſs of GOD and baſeneſs of the ſinner, each

each of them amazing when clearly ſeen! I felt, I ſay, how this young woman and many other ſouls ſtuck to mine by a tie of filiation; but I found I could no more communicate grace to her as I had done, by reaſon of her want of ſimplicity in the *will*, and that it was impoſſible for the divine efflux to enter, till her diſſimulation were deſtroyed, though I loved her much; but that *will* in her occaſioned the rejection, which could not end but by its change. How wonderful is GOD to give to poor creatures the experimental knowledge of his deep and myſterious ſecrets! For what I have experienced in reſpect of her I have done in regard to ſundry others. But I have given her caſe as one example. F. *La Combe* thought her virtuous: When I told him a little of this fault of her's, he accuſed me of raſh judgment, which indeed was far from me; but he afterwards came to ſee for himſelf enough of her craft and artifice.

BEFORE I arrived at *Grenoble*, the lady, my friend there, ſaw in a dream that our Lord gave me an infinite number of children all uniformly clad, bearing on their habits the marks of candor and innocence. She thought I was coming to take care of the children of the hoſpital. But as ſoon as ſhe told me it, I diſcerned that it was not that which the dream meant; but that our Lord would give me, by a ſpiritual fruitfulneſs, a great number of children; that they would not be my true children but in ſimplicity, candor and innocence. So great an averſion I have to artifice and diſguiſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

THE good brother I have ſpoken of (Chap. xviii.) found himſelf diſpoſed to lay open his heart to me like a child. Our Lord gave him through me all that was neceſſary for him; for though diſpoſed to the ſpiritual life, yet for want of courage and fidelity he had not duly advanced in it. Hereupon he ſaid unto me, "You are my "true mother." From that time GOD has granted him many favours through this poor nothing creature. I felt he was one of my ſons, one of the moſt faithful and cloſely united. Every time he came to ſee me, he became more encouraged and fortified to die thoroughly to himſelf, ſenſibly aſſured of the power of GOD in me, which he felt, in his dependent ſtate. Our Lord inſtructed him in ſilence, and prepared him to receive his grace, without the mediation of words, which carried on its operation in him, in proportion as he died more to himſelf. CHRIST has declared, "Where "two or three are gathered together in my name "there am I in the midſt of them." With the greateſt certainty, through his bleſſed operations, is this experienced. As this brother was already advanced in the ſpiritual life, and had only ſtopped and been retarded in it, he was ſoon recovered hereby.

IN proportion as his ſoul advanced ſufficiently for continuing in ſilence before GOD, and as the Word operated on him in ſilence, being vivid and fruitful, and not a ſtate of indolence, as ſome ignorantly imagine, he thereby grew in grace. Oh, immediate ineffable Word! who telleſt us every

very thing without articulating any thing! He who has never experienced thee knows nothing.— It was then given to him to communicate with me in ſilence the operations of that divine Word, the fulneſs thereof in him became more abundant, like a ſluice lifted up, which diſcharges itſelf with profuſion, and that with ſo much force and grace in ſouls well diſpoſed, that the full river does not flow with more impetuoſity. But alas! how few ſouls are pure enough for this enjoyment paſſing in them after ſuch a manner! This fulneſs which he received ſtill emptied him more of himſelf, putting him in a ſtate of deeper ſilence before GOD, and a greater detachment from every thing elſe. It ſtill diſpoſed him more both for GOD and for me.

OH my GOD, how well I comprehended in this ſilence that in ſouls which are wholly thine thy grace flows like a river! This is that *well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life*; the great myſtery which CHRIST ſpoke of, and revealed to the *Samaritan* woman. It ſprings up in ſuch abundance that there is a ſufficiency in it for filling an infinite number of ſouls, each according to its degree, without ceaſing to be full. Oh admirable hierarchy, which begins in this life, to continue through all eternity! Yes, there is a hierarchy among ſaints on earth, even as among Angels in Heaven. And thoſe who have ſerved as conduits to water their ſouls, ſhall continue ſuch in eternity. The water of life will flow from the ſacred ſource into the ſouls of all thoſe who have lived by grace, more or leſs, as they are fitted, extended or dilated to receive of its abundance. And it requires more of largeneſs and extent both to receive and to communicate abundantly to others. Thoſe who

who are dead in ſin receive nothing of this plenitude of life. Through the want of this they may properly be ſaid to be dead; all the paſſages, by which life might flow into them, being cloſed up by ſin. But ſouls living in the pure love of GOD all receive from this fulneſs more or leſs, according as they are diſpoſed or fitted for it by the purity and receptivity of the ſoul. But all who are come ſo far as to receive the grace, are not from thence in a conditon to communicate it. They have a great way to advance before they become fitted for that.

THIS good brother had occaſion to bring to me ſome of his companions; and GOD took hold of them all. It was at the very time that GOD gave me theſe good Religious, that the others of the ſame order were making all the ravages I have mentioned, and oppoſing with all their might the holy ſpirit of GOD. I could not but admire to ſee how GOD was pleaſed to make himſelf amends for former damages, by the pouring out of his ſpirit in abundance on theſe good friars, while the others were labouring vehemently againſt it, doing all they could to deſtroy its dominion and efficacy in their fellow-mortals. But their labours of this kind had no great effect; thoſe good ſouls inſtead of being ſtaggered by perſecutions, grew ſtronger by it. The Superior, and the maſter of the novices of the houſe in which this good brother was, declared againſt me, without knowing me; and were grievouſly chagrined that a WOMAN, as they ſaid, ſhould be ſo much flocked to, and ſo much ſought after. For looking at the things as they were in themſelves, and not as they were in GOD, who does whatever pleaſes him, they had nothing but contempt for the gift which was

was lodged in ſo mean an inſtrument, inſtead of eſteeming GOD and his grace, attending to the meanneſs of the ſubject in which he ſheds it. Yet this good brother at length got the ſuperior to come ſee me, and thank me for the charities which he ſaid I had done them: Our Lord ſo ordered, that he found ſomething in my converſation which reached and took hold of him. At length he was compleatly gained and brought over. And he it was, who ſome time after, being viſiter, diſperſed ſuch a number of thoſe books, bought at their own charge, which the others had tried utterly to deſtroy. Oh how wonderful art thou, my GOD! In all thy ways how wiſe, in all thy conduct how full of love! How well thou canſt fruſtrate all the falſe wiſdom of men, and triumph over their vain precautions!

THERE were in this noviciate many novices. The eldeſt of them grew ſo very uneaſy under his vocation, that he knew not what to do. So great was his trouble that he could neither read, ſtudy pray, nor do ſcarce any of his duties. His companion brought him to me. We ſpoke a while together, and the Lord diſcovered to me both the cauſe of his diſorder and its remedy. I told it to him; and he began to practiſe prayer, even that of the heart. He was on a ſudden wonderfully changed, and the Lord highly favoured him. As I ſpoke to him grace wrought in his heart, and his ſoul drank it in, as the parched ground does the gentle rain. He felt himſelf quit of his pain before he left the room. He then readily, joyfully, and perfectly performed all his exerciſes, which before were done with reluctance and diſguſt. He now both ſtudied and prayed eaſily, and diſcharged all his duties, in ſuch a manner,

that he was ſcarce known to himſelf or others. What aſtoniſhed him moſt was a ſprout of life which remained with him, and a gift of prayer. He ſaw that there was readily given him what he could never have before, whatever pains he took for it: And this enlivening ſprout was the principle which made him act, gave him grace for his employments, and an inward fruition of the grace of GOD, which brought all good with it. He gradually brought me all the novices, all of whom partook of the effects of grace, though differently, according to their different degrees. Never was there a more flouriſhing noviciate,

THE maſter and Superior could not forbear admiring ſo great a change in their novices, though they did not penetrate the cauſe of it. One day, as they were ſpeaking of it to the Collector, for they eſteemed him highly on account of his merit and virtue, and telling him, they were ſurpriſed at the change in the novices, and the bleſſing the Lord had beſtowed on the noviciate, he ſaid to them, "My fathers, if you will permit "me, I will tell you the reaſon of it. It is the "lady againſt whom ye have exclaimed ſo much "without knowing her, whom GOD has made "uſe of for all this." They were very much ſurpriſed; and both the maſter, though advanced in age, and his ſuperior then ſubmitted humbly to practiſe prayer, after the manner taught by a little book,* which the Lord inſpired me to write, and of which I ſhall ſay more hereafter: And they reaped ſuch benefit from it, that the ſuperior ſaid "to me, "I am become quite a new man. I "could

* The ſhort method of Prayer.

"could not practiſe prayer before, becauſe my "reaſoning faculty was grown dull and exhauſted; "but now I do it as often as I will, with eaſe, with "much fruit, and a quite different ſenſation of "the preſence of GOD:" And the maſter ſaid, "I have been a *Religious*, or friar, theſe forty "years, and can truly ſay that I never knew how "to pray, nor have I ever known or taſted of "GOD, as I have done ſince I read that little "book."

MANY others were gained to GOD, beſides thoſe whom I looked on to be my true children, and who coſt me the pangs of their birth. For the others I felt not that maternity, and that intimate efflux of grace I have ſpoken of, though they were won to the Lord by my means. He gave me a very great number of children, and three famous friars, of an order by which I have been, and ſtill am, very much perſecuted. He made me alſo of ſervice to a great number of Nuns, of virtuous young women, and even men of the world; among the reſt a young man of quality, who had quitted the order of the knights of *Malta*, to take that of the prieſthood. He was the relation of a biſhop near him, who had other deſigns of preferment for him: He has been much favoured of the Lord, and is conſtant in prayer. I could not deſcribe the great number of ſouls which were then given me, as well maids as wives, prieſts and friars. But there were there three curates, one canon, and one grand-vicar, who were more particularly given me. There was one prieſt very intimately given me, for whom I ſuffered much, through his not being willing to die to himſelf, and loving himſelf too much; with a ſad regret I ſaw him decaying, falling away till

was quite ſnatched from me. As for the others there are ſome of them who have continued ſtedfaſt and immoveable, ſome whom the tempeſt has ſhaken a little, but not torn away. Though theſe ſtart aſide yet they ſtill return. But thoſe who are ſnatched quite away return no more.

THERE was one true daughter given me, whom our Lord made uſe of to gain many others to him. She was in a ſtrange ſtate of death when I firſt ſaw her, and by me he gave her life and peace. She afterwards fell extremely ill. The doctors ſaid ſhe would die; but I had an aſſurance of the contrary, and that GOD would make uſe of her, (as he has done) to gain ſouls. There was in a monaſtery a young woman confined in a ſtate of diſtraction. I ſaw her, I knew her caſe, and that it was not what they thought of it. As ſoon as I had ſpoken to her ſhe recovered: But the prioreſs did not like that I ſhould tell her my thoughts of it, becauſe the perſon who had brought her thither was her friend. They plagued her more than before, and threw her back again into her diſtraction.

A SISTER of another monaſtery was for eight years paſt in a deep melancholy, unrelieved by any one; for her director increaſed it, by practiſing remedies contrary to her diſorder. I had never been in that monaſtery; for I did not go into ſuch places, unleſs I were ſent for, as I did not think it right to intrude, but left by myſelf to be conducted of Providence. I was very much ſurpriſed that at eight o'clock at night one came for me from the prioreſs. It was in the long days of ſummer, and being near it I went. I met with a ſiſter who told me her caſe; ſhe had gone to

to ſuch exceſs, that ſeeing no remedy for it, ſhe had taken a knife to kill herſelf; but the knife fell out of her hand; and a perſon coming to ſee her had adviſed her to ſpake to me. Our Lord made me know at firſt what the matter was; and that he required her to reſign herſelf to him, inſtead of reſiſting him as they had made her do for eight years. I was inſtrumental to draw her into ſuch a reſignation, that ſhe entered at once into a peace of paradiſe; all her pains and troubles were inſtantly baniſhed; and never returned ſince. She has the greateſt capacity of any in the houſe. She was preſently ſo changed as to be the admiration of the whole community. Our Lord gave her a very great gift of prayer and his continual preſence, with a faculty and readineſs for every thing. She was given me for a daughter; and alſo a domeſtic ſiſter, who had troubled her for twenty-two years paſt, was delivered from her troubles, and is become a very religious woman. That produced a cloſe tie of friendſhip between the prioreſs and me, as the wonderful change and the peace of this ſiſter ſurpriſed her, ſhe having ſo often ſeen her in her terrible pains. I alſo contracted other ſuch ties in this monaſtery, where there are ſouls under the Lord's ſpecial regard, whom he drew to himſelf by the means he had been pleaſed to make choice of.

CHAP. XXI.

I WAS moved to read the holy ſcripture. It had been ſome time ſince I had read at all, not finding in myſelf any void to be filled. When I began I was impelled to write the paſſage, and inſtantly upon it, its explication was given me,

which I alſo wrote, going on with inconceivable expedition, light being poured in upon me in ſuch a manner, that I found I had in myſelf latent treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge which I had not yet known of. Before I wrote I knew not what I was going to write. And after I had written, I remembered nothing of what I had penned; nor could I make uſe of any part of it for the help of ſouls; but the Lord gave me, at the time I ſpoke to them, without any ſtudy or reflection of mine, all that was neceſſary for them. Thus the Lord made me go on with an explanation of the holy internal ſenſe of the Scriptures * I had no other book but the bible, nor ever made uſe of any but that, and without even ſeeking for any thing. When in writing on the Old Teſtament I made uſe of paſſages of the New, to ſupport what I had ſaid, it was without ſeeking them, they were given me along with the explication; and in writing on the New Teſtament, and therein making uſe of paſſages of the Old, they were given me in like manner without my ſeeking any thing. I had ſcarce any time for writing but in the night, allowing only one or two hours to ſleep. The Lord made me write with ſo much purity, that I was obliged to leave off or begin again, as he was pleaſed to order. He proved me every way herein. When I writ by day, often ſuddenly interrupted, I left the word unfiniſhed, and he afterwards gave me what he pleaſed. What I wrote was not in my head: That part was kept free and diſengaged. If I gave any way to reflection I was puniſhed for it, and could not proceed. And yet ſometimes I was

* All her explications have been publiſhed; thoſe on the Old Teſtament in twelve ſmall octavo volumes, and on the New Teſtament in eight.

was not duly attentive to the divine ſpirit, thinking I did well to continue when I had time, even without feeling his immediate impulſe or enlightning influence, from whence it is eaſy to ſee ſome places clear and conſiſtent, and others which have neither taſte nor unction; ſuch is the difference of the ſpirit of GOD from the human and natural ſpirit, tho they are left juſt as I wrote them, yet I am ready, if ordered, to adjuſt them according to my preſent light. Didſt thou not, Oh my GOD, turn me a hundred ways, to prove whether I was without any reſerve, through every kind of trial or whether I had not yet ſome little intereſt for myſelf? My ſoul became hereby readily pliable to every diſcovery of the divine will, and whatever kind of humiliations attended me to counterbalance my Lord's favours, till every thing, high or low, was rendered alike to me.

METHINKS the Lord acts with his deareſt friends as the ſea with its waves. Sometimes it puſhes them againſt the rocks where they break in pieces, ſometimes it rolls them on the ſand, or daſhes them on the mire, then inſtantly it retakes them into the depths of its own boſom, where they are abſorpt with the ſame rapidity that they were firſt ejected. Even among the good the far greater part are ſouls only of *Mercy*; and ſurely that is well: But to appertain to divine *Juſtice*, oh how rare and yet how great! *Mercy* is all diſtributive in favour of the creature, but *Juſtice* deſtroys every thing of the creature, without ſparing any thing. It can demand nothing but for itſelf; yet they muſt be voluntary victims, as have no other object but itſelf in what they ſuffer.

THE lady, who was my particular friend, began to conceive ſome jealouſy on the applauſe gi-

the ſeveral perſecutions. This counſellor was one of my intimate friends, and a pattern of piety. The book has already paſſed through five or ſix editions; and our Lord has given a very great benediction to it. Thoſe good friars took fifteen hundred of them. The devil became ſo enraged againſt me on account of the conqueſt which God made by me, that I was aſſured he was going to ſtir up againſt me a violent perſecution. All that gave me no trouble. Let him ſtir up againſt me ever ſo ſtrange perſecutions: I know they will all ſerve to the glory of my God.

CHAP. XXII.

A POOR girl of very great ſimplicity, who earned her livelihood by her labour, and was inwardly favoured of the Lord, came all forrowful to me, and ſaid, "Oh my mother, what "ſtrange things have I ſeen!" I aſked what they were, "Alas *ſaid ſhe*, I have ſeen you like a lamb "in the midſt of a vaſt troop of furious wolves. "I have ſeen a frightful multitude of people of all "ranks and robes, of all ages, ſexes and conditi- "ons, prieſts, friars, married men, maids and "wives, with pikes, halberts and drawn ſwords, "all eager for your inſtant deſtruction. You let "them alone without ſtirring, or being ſurpriſed "and without offering any way to defend your- "ſelf. I looked on all ſides to ſee whether any "one would come to aſſiſt and defend you; "but I ſaw not one." Some days after, thoſe, who through envy were raiſing private batteries againſt me, broke forth. Libels began to ſpread. Envious people wrote againſt me, without knowing me. They ſaid, "I was a ſorcereſs, that it "was

"was by a magic power I attracted ſouls, that "every thing in me was diabolical; that if I did "ſome charities, it was becauſe I coined, and "put off falſe money," with many other groſs accuſations, equally falſe, groundleſs and abſurd.

As the tempeſt increaſed every day, ſome of my friends adviſed me to withdraw. But before I mention my leaving *Grenoble*, I muſt ſay ſomething farther of my ſtate while here.

JESUS CHRIST was communicated to me in all his ſtates. His apoſtolic ſtate was at that time ſet moſt before me. When I could neither write nor impart the overflowing of my ſoul any other way, I was all languiſhing. I experienced what our Lord ſaid to his diſciples, "*With deſire I* "*have deſired to eat this paſſover with you.*" Luke xxii. 15. It was the communion of himſelf by that ſupper, and by his paſſion, when he ſaid, "It is finiſhed." John xix. 30. *And bowing his head he gave up the ghoſt*, returning his ſpirit as well as his kingdom to his Father; as if he had then ſaid, "My Father, my kingdom is that I "reign by thee, and thou by me, over men; "which can only be done by the ſhedding abroad "of my ſpirit upon them: Let then my ſpirit be "communicated to them by my death." In this is the finiſhing and conſummation of all things. Often the plenitude of this ſpirit took from me the liberty of writing. I had nothing for myſelf; all was for others; and yet I wanted nothing. I was like thoſe nurſes who are full of milk, though they are not themſelves fed thereby.

BEFORE I began to write in the book of Kings on what regards David, I felt ſo cloſe an union with

ven me, God ſo permitting it for the farther purification of her ſoul, through this weakneſs, and the pain it cauſed her. Alſo ſome confeſſors began to be uneaſy, ſaying, "It was none of my "buſineſs to invade their province, and to med-"dle in the help of ſouls; and that there were "ſome of their penitents which had an entire o-"penneſs for me." It was eaſy for me to obſerve the difference betwixt thoſe confeſſors who, in their conducting of ſouls, ſeek nothing but God, and thoſe who ſeek themſelves therein; for the firſt came to ſee me, and rejoiced greatly at the grace of God beſtowed on their penitents, without fixing their attention on the inſtrument: The others, on the contrary, tried underhand to ſtir up the town againſt me. I ſaw that they would be in the right to oppoſe me, if I had intruded of myſelf; but I could do nothing but what the Lord made me do. At times there came ſome to diſpute and oppoſe me. Two friars came one of them a man of profound learning and a great preacher. They came ſeparately, after having ſtudied for a number of difficult things to propoſe to me. But though they were matters far out of my reach, the Lord made me anſwer as juſtly as if I had ſtudied them all my life; after which I ſpoke to them as he inſpired me. They went away not only convinced and ſatisfied, but even affected with the love of God.

I still continued writing with a prodigious ſwiftneſs; for the hand could ſcarce follow faſt enough the ſpirit which dictated, and through the whole progreſs of ſo long a work I never altered my manner nor made uſe of any other book than the bible itſelf. The tranſcriber, whatever diligence he uſed, could not copy in five days what I wrote

I wrote in one night. Whatever is good in it comes from God only. Whatever is otherwiſe from myſelf; I mean from the mixture which I have made, without duly attending to it, of my own impurity with his pure and chaſte doctrine. In the day I had ſcarce time to eat, by reaſon of the vaſt numbers of people which came thronging to me. I wrote the canticles in a day and a half, and received ſeveral viſits beſides.

Here I may add to what I have ſaid about my writings, that a conſiderable part of the book of *Judges* happened by ſome means to be loſt. Being deſired to render that book compleat, I wrote over again the places loſt. Afterwards when the people were about leaving the houſe, they were found. My former and latter explications, on compariſon, were found to be perfectly conformable to each other, which greatly ſurpriſed perſons of knowledge and merit, who atteſted the truth of it.

There came to ſee me a counſellor of the parliament a ſervant of God, who, finding on my table * *a tract on Prayer*, which I had wrote long before, deſired me to lend it. Having read it and liked it much, he lent it to ſome friends, to whom he thought it might be of ſervice. Every one wanted copies of it. He reſolved therefore to have it printed. The impreſſion was begun, and proper approbations given to it. They requeſted me to write a preface, which I did, and thus was that little book printed, which has ſince made ſo much noiſe, and been the pretence for

* This was *le Moyen court*, of which an entire new tranſlation is to be given at the end of the third part.

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with that holy patriarch, that I communicated with him, as if he had been preſent. I comprehended the greatneſs of his grace, the conduct of GOD over him, and all the circumſtances of the ſtates through which he had paſſed; that he was a lively figure of JESUS CHRIST, and a choſen paſtor for *Iſrael*. It ſeemed to me that all our Lord made, and would make me do for ſouls, would be in union with David, my dear King, and with thoſe for whom there was given me at the ſame time an union like that which I had with him, but ſtill moſt of all with JESUS CHRIST, ſprung from the ſeed of David. In this divine union my words had wonderful effect, even the formation of JESUS CHRIST in the ſouls of others. I was in no wiſe miſtreſs of ſaying the things I did. He who conducted me made me ſay what he pleaſed, and as long as he pleaſed. To ſome I was not permitted to ſpeak a word; and to others there flowed forth as it were a deluge of grace, and yet this pure love admitted not of any ſuperfluity, or matter of empty amuſement. When queſtions were aſked, to which an anſwer were uſeleſs, it was not given me. It was the ſame caſe in regard to ſuch as our Lord was pleaſed to conduct through death to themſelves, and who came to ſeek for human conſolation. I had nothing for them but what was purely neceſſary, and could proceed no farther. I could at leaſt only ſpeak of indifferent things, in ſuch liberty as GOD allows, in order to ſuit every one, and not be unſociable or diſagreeable to one's neighbour; but for his own *word*, he himſelf is the diſpenſer of it. Oh if preachers were duly careful to ſpeak only in that ſpirit, what fruits would they bring forth in the lives of their hearers! With my true children I could communicate beſt in ſilence, in the

ſpiritual language of the divine word. I had the conſolation ſome time before to hear one read in St. AUGUSTINE a converſation he had with his mother. He complains of the neceſſity of returning from that heavenly language to words, by reaſon of our weakneſs. I ſometimes ſaid, "Oh "my love, give me hearts large enough to re- "ceive and contain the fulneſs beſtowed on me." I had wonderful intelligences opened to me, of the communication at the ſupper betwixt JESUS CHRIST and St. John, and continued betwixt St. John and the mother of our Lord; how the holy child communicated himſelf to the Eaſtern ſages, and to the ſhepherds, conveying to them the knowledge of his divinity.

AFTER this manner when the Holy Virgin approached ELIZABETH, a wonderful commerce was maintained betwixt JESUS CHRIST and St. JOHN the Baptiſt, who after this manifeſted no eagerneſs to come to ſee CHRIST, but was drawn to retire into the deſart, to receive the like communications with the greateſt plenitude. When he came forth to preach repentance, he ſaid, not that he was the WORD, but only a VOICE which was ſent to make way, or open a paſſage into the hearts of the people for CHRIST the WORD. He baptiſed only with water, for that was his function; for as the water in running off leaves nothing, ſo does the VOICE when 'tis paſt. But the WORD baptiſed with the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe he imprinted himſelf on ſouls, and communicated with them by that Holy Spirit. It is not obſerved that JESUS CHRIST ſaid any thing during the whole obſcure part of his life, though it is true that not any of his words ſhall be loſt. Oh Love, if all thou haſt ſaid and operated in ſilence were to be written

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ten, I think *the whole world could not contain the books that ſhould be written.* JOHN xxi. 25.

ALL that I experienced was ſhewn me in the Holy Scripture; and I ſaw with admiration that there paſſed nothing within my ſoul which was not in JESUS CHRIST and in the Holy Scripture. I muſt paſs over very many things in ſilence, becauſe they cannot be expreſſed; and if they were expreſſed could not be underſtood or comprehended.

I OFTEN felt much for Father *La Combe*, who was not yet fixed in his ſtate of interior death, but often roſe and fell into alternatives. I was made ſenſible that he was a veſſel of election, whom GOD had choſen to carry his name among the *Gentiles*, and that he would ſhew him how much he muſt ſuffer for that name. Oh GOD! who can ever be able to comprehend the pure and holy union which thou formeſt betwixt thy children? A carnal world judges carnally of them, and imputes to a human attachment what is from the pureſt grace. If this union by any deviation be broken, the more pure and perfect it is, the more painfully will it be felt; the ſeparation of the ſoul from GOD by ſin being worſe than that from the body by death. For myſelf I may ſay I had a continual dependance on GOD, in every ſtate; my ſoul was ever willing to obey every motion of his ſpirit. I thought there could not be any thing in the world which he ſhould require from me, to which I would not give myſelf up readily and with pleaſure. I had no intereſt at all for myſelf. When GOD requires any thing from this wretched nothing, I find no reſiſtance left in me to his will, how rigorous ſoever it may appear.

Oh my Love, if there is a heart in the world of which thou art the ſole and abſolute maſter, mine ſeems to be one of that ſort. Thy will, however rigorous, is its life and its pleaſure; for it no more ſubſiſts but in thee alone.—I have wandered; which is uſual with me, occaſioned by interruptions, as well as by two grievous indiſpoſitions, which I have had ſince I began to write, as alſo by reſigning myſelf to the matter which carries my mind forward.

CHAP. XXIII.

TO reſume the thread of my ſtory, the Biſhop of *Grenoble*'s Almoner perſuaded me to go for ſome time to *Marſeilles*, to let the ſtorm paſs over; telling me that I ſhould be well received there, it being his native ſoil, and many people of merit there. I wrote to Father *La Combe* for his conſent hereto. He readily gave it. I might have gone to *Verceil*; for the Biſhop of *Verceil* had wrote me very obliging letters, earneſtly preſſing me to come thither: But a human reſpect, and fear of affording a handle to my enemies, gave me an extreme averſion thereto. When I make uſe of the term *enemies*, I muſt explain myſelf. It is not that I account any mortal to be in reality my enemy; viewing thoſe, whom GOD makes uſe of, no otherwiſe than as inſtruments of his juſtice.

BESIDE the above, the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*, who, ſince my departure from her, had been more enlightened by her own experience, having met with a part of the things which I thought would befall her, had conceived for me a very ſtrong friend-

friendſhip and intimate union of ſpirit, in ſuch a manner that no two ſiſters could be more united than we were. She was extremely deſirous that I would return to her, as I had formerly promiſed her. But I could not reſolve upon this, for fear leſt it ſhould be thought that I was gone after Father *La Combe*. But, oh my GOD, how was this relick of *ſelf-love* overturned by the ſecret ways of thy adorable Providence! I had yet that exterior ſupport of having it in my power to ſay, that I had never gone after him. There had been no room given to any body to accuſe me of any indirect attachment to him; for when it depended on myſelf not to continue with him, I did not do it. The Biſhop of *Geneva* had not failed to write againſt me to *Grenoble*, as he had done to other places. His nephew had gone from houſe to houſe to cry me down. All this was indifferent to me; and I did not ceaſe to do to his dioceſe all the good in my power. I even wrote to him in a reſpectful manner; but his heart was too much cloſed to yield to ſuch things.

BEFORE I went off from *Grenoble*, that good girl I have ſpoken of came to me weeping, and told me, "I was going, and that I hid it from "her, becauſe I would have nobody know it; "but that the devil would be before me in all "the places I ſhould go to; that I was going to "a town, where I ſhould ſcarce be arrived, but "he would ſtir up that whole town againſt me, "and would do me all the harm he poſſibly "could." What had obliged me to conceal my departure, was my fear of being loaded with viſits, and teſtimonies of friendſhip from a number of good perſons, who had a very great affection for me.

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I EMBARKED then upon the *Rhone*, with my chambermaid and a young woman of *Grenoble*, whom the Lord had highly favoured through my means. The Biſhop of *Grenoble*'s Almoner alſo accompanied me, with another very worthy Eccleſiaſtic. We met with many alarming accidents and wonderful preſervations; but thoſe inſtant dangers, which affrighted others, far from alarming me, augmented my peace. The Biſhop of *Grenoble*'s Almoner was much aſtoniſhed. He was in a deſperate fright, when the boat ſtruck againſt the rock, and opened at the ſtroke; and in his emotion looking attentively at me, he obſerved that I did not change my countenance, or move my eyebrows, retaining all my tranquillity. I did not ſo much as feel the firſt emotions of ſurpriſe, which are natural to every body on thoſe occaſions, as they depend not on ourſelves. What cauſed my peace in ſuch dangers as terrify others at once, was my reſignation to GOD, and becauſe death is much more agreeable to me than life, if ſuch were his will, to which I deſire to be ever patiently ſubmiſſive.

As I was going off from *Grenoble*, a man of quality, a great ſervant of GOD, and one of my intimate friends, had given me a letter for a knight of *Malta*, who was very devout, and whom I have eſteemed ſince I have known him, as a man whom our Lord deſigned to ſerve the order of *Malta* greatly, and to be its ornament and ſupport by his holy life. I had told him that I thought he ſhould go thither, and that GOD would aſſuredly make uſe of him to diffuſe a ſpirit of piety into many of the knights. He is actually gone to *Malta*, where the firſt places were ſoon given him. This man of quality ſent him the little

book of prayer written by me, and printed at *Grenoble*. He had a chaplain very averſe to the ſpiritual path. He took this book, and condemned it at once, went to ſtir up a part of the town, and amongſt the reſt a ſet of men who call themſelves the ſeventy-two diſciples of St. CYRAN *. I arrived at *Marſeilles* at ten o'clock in the morning, and that very afternoon all was in a noiſe againſt me. Some went to ſpeak to the Biſhop, telling him that, on account of that little book, it was neceſſary to baniſh me from that city. They gave him the book, which he examined with one of his prebends. He liked it well. He ſent for Monſieur MALAVAL and a father Recollect, who he knew had come to ſee me a little after my arrival, to enquire of them from whence that great tumult had its riſe, which indeed had no other effect on me than to make me ſmile, ſeeing ſo ſoon accompliſhed what that young woman had foretold me. Monſieur MALAVAL and that good *Religious* told the Biſhop what they thought of me; after which he teſtified much uneaſineſs at the inſult given me. I was obliged to go to ſee him. He received me with extraordinary reſpect, and begged my excuſe for what had happened, deſired me to ſtay at *Marſeilles*, and aſſured me that he would protect me. He even aſked where I lodged, that he might come to ſee me.

Next day the Biſhop of *Grenoble*'s Almoner went to ſee him, with that other prieſt who had come with us. The Biſhop of *Marſeilles* again teſtified to them his ſorrow for the inſults given me without any cauſe; and told them, that it was uſual with thoſe perſons to inſult all ſuch as were not of their cabal, that they had even inſulted himſelf. They

* Chief of the *Janſeniſts in France*.

They were not content with that. They wrote to me the moſt offenſive letters poſſible, though at the ſame time they did not know me. I apprehended that our Lord was beginning in earneſt to take from me every place of abode; and thoſe words were renewed in my mind, "The foxes have "holes, the birds of the air have neſts, but the "ſon of man hath not where to lay his head."

IN the ſhort time of my ſtay at *Marſeilles*, I was inſtrumental to ſupport ſome good ſouls, and amongſt others an Eccleſiaſtic, who till then was unacquainted with me. After having finiſhed his thankſgiving in the church, ſeeing me go out, he followed me into the houſe in which I lodged: Then he told me, "the Lord had inſpired him to "addreſs me, and to open his inward ſtate to "me." He did it with as much ſimplicity as humility, and the Lord gave him through me all that was neceſſary for him, from whence he was filled with joy, and thankful acknowledgments to GOD: For though there were many ſpiritual perſons there, and even of his intimate friends, he never had been moved to open himſelf to any of them. He was a ſervant of GOD, favoured by him with a ſingular gift of prayer. During the eight days I was at *Marſeilles*, I ſaw many good ſouls there; for, through all my perſecutions, our Lord always ſtruck ſome good ſtroke of his own right hand; and that good Eccleſiaſtic was delivered from an anxiety of mind, which had much afflicted him for ſome years paſt.

AFTER I had left *Grenoble*, thoſe who hated me, without knowing me, ſpread libels againſt me. A woman for whom I had a great love, and whom I had even extricated from an engagement

which ſhe had continued in for ſeveral years, and contributed to her diſcarding the perſon to whom ſhe had been attached, ſuffering her mind to reſume its fondneſs for that pernicious engagement, became ſo violently enraged againſt me for having broke it off; though I had freely been at ſome expence to procure her freedom from it, that ſhe went to the Biſhop of *Grenoble*, to tell him that I had counſelled her to do an act of injuſtice. She then went from confeſſor to confeſſor repeating the ſame ſtory, to animate them againſt me. As they were too ſuſceptible of the prejudices infuſed, the fire was ſoon kindled in all quarters. There were none but thoſe who knew me, and who loved GOD that took my part. They became more cloſely united to me in ſympathy through my perſecution. It had been very eaſy for me to deſtroy the calumny, as well with the Biſhop of *Grenoble* as in town. I had only to tell who the perſon was, and to ſhew the fruits of her diſorder: but as I could not declare the guilty perſon, without making known at the ſame time the other who had been her accomplice, who now, being touched of GOD, was very penitent, I thought it beſt for me to ſuffer and be ſilent. There was a very pious man who knew all her hiſtory, from the beginning to the end of it, who wrote to her, that if ſhe did not retract her lies, he would publiſh the account of her wicked life, to make known both her groſs iniquity and my innocence. She continued ſome time in her malice, writing that I was a ſorcereſs, with many other falſhoods. Nevertheleſs, ſome time after ſhe had ſuch a cruel remorſe of conſcience on this account, that ſhe wrote both to the Biſhop and others to retract what ſhe had ſaid. She got one to write to me, to inform me that ſhe was in deſpair

ſpair for what ſhe had done; that GOD had puniſhed her in ſuch a manner, that ſhe had never felt any thing like it. After theſe recantations the outcry abated, the Biſhop was diſabuſed, and ſince that time he has teſtified a great regard for me. This creature had, among other things, ſaid that I made myſelf be worſhipped; and other unparalelled fooleries. As ſhe had formerly been beſide herſelf, I think in what ſhe did to me there was more of weakneſs than of malice.

FROM *Marſeilles* I knew not how or whither I ſhould turn next. I ſaw no likelihood either of ſtaying or returning to *Grenoble*, where I had left my daughter in a convent. On the other ſide F. *La Combe* had wrote to me that he did not think I ought to go to *Paris*. I even felt a ſtrong reluctance to the view of going thither, which made me think it was not yet the time for it. One morning I felt myſelf inwardly preſſed to go off. I took a litter to go to ſee the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*, which was, I thought, the moſt honourable refuge for me in my preſent condition. I imagined I might have paſſed through *Nice* to her habitation, as ſome had aſſured me I might. But when I arrived at *Nice*, I was greatly ſurpriſed to learn that the litter could not paſs the mountain to go thither. I knew not what to do, nor which way to turn, being here alone, forſaken of every body, and not knowing what GOD required of me. My confuſion and croſſes ſeemed daily to increaſe. I ſaw myſelf, without refuge or retreat, wandering as a vagabond. All the tradeſmen, whom I ſaw in their ſhops, appeared to me happy, in having a dwelling place of their own to retire to. Nothing in the world ſeemed harder than this wandering life to me, who naturally loved honour and decorum.

As I was in this uncertainty, not knowing what courſe to take, one came to tell me that next day a ſhallop would ſet off, which uſed to go in one day to *Genoa*; and that if I choſe it, they would land me at *Savona*, from whence I might get myſelf carried to the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*'s houſe. To that I conſented, as I could not be ſupplied with any other way of getting thither.

I HAD ſome joy at embarking on the ſea. I ſaid in myſelf, "If I am the dregs of the earth, the "ſcorn and off-ſcouring of nature, I am now go-"ing to embark on the element which above all "others is the moſt treacherous; if it be the Lord's "pleaſure to plunge me in the waves, it ſhall be "mine to periſh in them." There came a tempeſt in a place pretty dangerous for a ſmall boat; and the mariners were ſome of the wickedeſt. The irritation of the waves gave a ſatisfaction to my mind. I pleaſed myſelf in thinking that thoſe mutinous billows might probably ſupply me with a grave. Perhaps I carried the point too far in the pleaſure I took, at ſeeing myſelf beaten and bandied by the ſwelling waters. Thoſe who were with me took notice of my intrepidity, but knew not the cauſe of it. I aſked of thee, my Love, ſome little hole of a rock to be placed in, there to live ſeparate from all creatures. I figured to myſelf, that ſome uninhabited iſland would have terminated all my diſgraces, and put me in a condition of infallibly doing thy will. But, oh my divine Love, thou deſigned me a priſon far different from that of the rock, and quite another baniſhment than that of the uninhabited iſland. Thou reſerved me to be battered by billows, more irritated than thoſe of the ſea. Calumnies proved the outrageous unrelenting waves, to which I was to

to be expoſed, in order to be laſhed and toſſed by them without mercy. By the tempeſt ſwelling, againſt us we were kept back, and inſtead of a ſhort day's paſſage to *Genoa*, we were eleven days in making it. How peaceable was my heart in ſo violent an agitation! The ſwelling of the ſea, and the fury of its waves were as I thought, only a figure of that ſwelling fury which all the creatures had againſt me. I ſaid to thee, oh my Love, "Arm them all to avenge thyſelf on me "for my infidelities, and for thoſe of all the "creatures." I ſaw thy right hand armed againſt me; and I loved more than my life the ſtrokes it gave me. We could not land at *Savona*. We were obliged to go on to *Genoa*. We arrived there in the beginning of the week before Eaſter.

WHILE I was there I was obliged to bear the inſults of the inhabitants, cauſed by the reſentment they had againſt the French, for the havock of a late bombardment. The Doge was newly gone out of the city, and had carried off with him all the litters. Wherefore I could not get one, and was obliged to ſtay ſeveral days at exceſſive expences, for the people there demanded of us exorbitant ſums, and as much for every ſingle perſon as they would have aſked for a company at the beſt eating houſe in *Paris*. I had little money left, but my ſtore in Providence could not be exhauſted. I begged with the greateſt earneſtneſs for a litter at any price, to paſs the feaſt of Eaſter at the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*'s houſe. It was then within three days of Eaſter; and I could ſcarce any way get myſelf to be underſtood. By the force of intreaty, they brought me at length a ſorry litter with lame mules, and told me that they would take me readily

to *Verceil*, which was only two days journey but demanded an enormous ſum for it; they would not engage to take me to the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*'s houſe, as they knew not where her eſtate lay. This was to me a ſtrong mortification; for I was very unwilling to go to *Verceil*; nevertheleſs the proximity of Eaſter, and want of money, in a country where they uſed every kind of extortion and tyranny, left me no choice. I was under an abſolute neceſſity of ſubmitting to be thus conveyed to *Verceil*.

THUS Providence *led me whither I would not*. Our muleteer was one of the moſt brutal men to be met with; and for an increaſe of my affliction, I had ſent away to *Verceil* the eccleſiaſtic who accompanied us, to prevent their ſurprize at ſeeing me there, after I had proteſted againſt going thither. That eccleſiaſtic was very coarſely treated on the road, through the hatred they bore to the French, and they made him go part of the way on foot, ſo that, though he ſet off the day before me, he arrived there only a few hours ſooner than I did. And as for the fellow who conducted us, ſeeing he had only women under his care, he uſed us in the moſt inſolent and beariſh manner.

WE paſſed through a wood infeſted with robbers. The muleteer was afraid, and told us, "that, if we met any of them on the road, we "ſhould be murdered; for they ſpared nobody." Scarce had he uttered theſe words, when there appeared four men well armed. They immediately ſtopped the litter. The man was exceedingly frighted. I made a light bow of the head, with a ſmile, for I had no fear, and was ſo entirely reſigned

reſigned to providence, that it was all one to die this way or any other; in the ſea, or by the hands of robbers. But oh my GOD, how wonderful at this, as at many other times, was thy protection over me! How many perils have I paſſed through upon mountains, and on the very edges of tremendous ſteep rocks! How often haſt thou checked the foot of the mule already ſlipping over the precipice! How often have I been like to be thrown headlong from thoſe frightful heights, into hideous torrents which, though rolling in chaſms far below our ſhrinking ſight, forced us to hear them by their horrible noiſe. When the dangers were moſt manifeſt, then was my faith the ſtrongeſt, as well as my intrepidity, being unable to wiſh for any thing elſe than what ſhould fall out, whether to be daſhed againſt the rocks, drowned, or killed any other way; every thing in the will of GOD being equal to me. The people who uſed to convey or attend me ſaid, "they had never "ſeen a courage like mine;" for the moſt alarming dangers, and the time when death appeared the moſt certain, were thoſe which ſeemed to pleaſe me the moſt. Was it not thy pleaſure, oh my GOD, which guarded me in every iminent danger, and held me back from roling down the precipice, on the inſtant of ſliding over its dizzy brow? The more eaſy I was about life, which I bore only becauſe thou waſt pleaſed to bear it, the more care thou tookeſt to preſerve it. There ſeemed a mutual emulation betwixt us, on my part to reſign it, and on thine to maintain it. The robbers then advanced to the litter; but I had no ſooner ſaluted them, than GOD made them change their deſign. Having puſhed off one another, as it were to hinder each of them from doing any harm; they reſpectfully ſaluted me,

and

and, with an air of compaſſion, unuſual to ſuch ſorts of perſons, retired. I was immediately ſtruck to the heart, oh my Love, with a full and clear conviction that it was a ſtroke of thy right hand, who had other deſigns over me than to ſuffer me to die by the hand of robbers. It is thy ſovereign power which takes away their all from thy devoted lovers; and deſtroys their lives with all that is of *ſelf* without pity or ſparing any thing.

The muleteer, ſeeing me attended only with two young women, thought he might treat me as he would perhaps expecting to draw money from me. Inſtead of taking me to the inn, he brought me to a mill, in which there was not one woman. There was but one ſingle chamber with ſeveral beds in it, in which the millers and muleteers lay together. In that chamber they forced me to ſtay. I told the muleteer I was not a perſon to lie in ſuch a place as he had brought me to; and wanted to oblige him to take me to the inn; but nothing of it would he do. I was conſtrained to go out on foot, at ten o'clock at night, carrying a part of my clothes, and to go a good way more than a quarter of a league of that country, where the leagues are very long, in the dark, in a ſtrange place, not knowing the way, croſſing one end of the wood infeſted with robbers, to endeavour to get to the inn. That fellow, ſeeing us go off from the place where he had wanted to make me lodge, with a bad deſign hooted after us in a very abuſive manner. I bore my humiliation chearfully, not without feeling it. But the will of God and my reſignation to it rendered every thing eaſy to me. We were well received at the inn; And the good people there did the beſt in

in their power for our recovery from the fatigue we had undergone. They aſſured us the place we had left was very dangerous. Next morning we were obliged to return on foot to the litter, for that man would not bring it to us. On the contrary he fell on us with a ſhower of freſh inſults. And to conſummate his baſe behaviour, he ſold me to the poſt, whereby I was forced to go the reſt of the way in a poſt-chaiſe inſtead of a litter.

In this equipage I arrived at *Alexandria* a frontier town, ſubject to *Spain*, on the ſide of the *Milaneſe*. Our driver took us, according to their cuſtom, to the poſt-houſe, I was exceedingly aſtoniſhed when I ſaw the landlady coming out not to receive him, but to oppoſe his entrance. She had heard there were women in the chaiſe, and taking us for a different ſort of women from what we were, ſhe proteſted againſt our coming in. On the other hand, the driver was determined to force his entrance in ſpite of her. Their diſpute roſe to ſuch a height, that a great number of the officers of the garriſon, with a vaſt mob, gathered at the noiſe, who were ſurpriſed at the odd humour of the woman in refuſing to lodge us. With whatever earneſtneſs I intreated the poſt to take us to ſome other houſe, he would not; ſo obſtinately was he bent on carrying his point. He aſſured the landlady we were perſons of honour and piety too; the marks whereof he had ſeen. At laſt, by force of preſſing inſtances, he obliged her to come to ſee us. As ſoon as ſhe had looked at us, ſhe acted as the robbers had done: She relented at once, and admitted us.

No ſooner had I alighted from the chaiſe, than ſhe ſaid to us, "Go ſhut yourſelves up in that "chamber

" chamber hard by, and do not ſtir, that my ſon " may not know you are here; for as ſoon as he " knows it he will kill you." She ſaid it with ſo much force, as did alſo the ſervant maid, that, if death had not ſo many charms for me, I ſhould have been ready to die with fear. The two poor girls with me were under frightful apprehenſions. When any ſtirred, or came to open the door, they thought they were coming to cut their throats. In ſhort they continued in a dreadful ſuſpence, between life and death, till next day, when we learned that that young man had ſworn to kill any woman who lodged at the houſe; becauſe a few days before an event had fallen out, which had like to have ruined him; a woman of a bad life having there privately murdered a man in ſome eſteem. That had coſt the houſe a heavy fine: And he was afraid of any more ſuch perſons coming, and not without reaſon.

CHAP. XXIV.

AFTER ſuch ſorts of adventures, and others which it would be too long to recite, I arrived at *Verceil*. I went to the inn where I was very ill received. I ſent for Father *La Combe*, who I thought had been already appriſed of my coming thither, by the Eccleſiaſtic whom I had ſent before, and who would be of ſo much ſervice to me. This Eccleſiaſtic was only a little while arrived. How much better on the road ſhould I have fared, if I had had him with me! For in that country they look upon ladies, accompanied with Eccleſiaſticks, with veneration, as perſons of honour and piety. Father *La Combe* came in a ſtrange fret at my arrival, GOD ſo permitting it: He

He could not hide it from me. He ſaid that every one would think I was come after him, and that would injure his reputation, which I found in that country was very high. I had had no leſs pain to go thither. It was neceſſity only which had obliged me to ſubmit to ſuch a diſagreeable taſk. The Father received me with coolneſs, and in ſuch a manner as let me ſufficiently ſee his ſentiments, and indeed redoubled my pain. I aſked him if he required me to return, adding, " that, if he did, " I would go off that moment, however oppreſſ- " ed and ſpent, both with fatigues and faſtings." He replied, " he did not know how the Biſhop of " *Verceil* would take my arrival, after he had gi- " ven over all his expectations of it, after I had " ſo long, and ſo obſtinately, refuſed the oblig- " ing offers he had made me; ſince which he no " longer expreſſed any deſire of ſeeing me."

IT ſeemed to me then as if I were rejected from the face of the earth, without being able to find any refuge in it, and as if all creatures were combined to cruſh me. I paſſed that night without ſleep, not knowing what courſe I ſhould be obliged to take, being perſecuted of my enemies, and a ſubject of diſgrace to my friends.

WHEN it was known at the inn, that I was one of Father *La Combe's* acquaintance, they treated me with the greateſt reſpect and kindneſs; for they eſteemed him as a ſaint. The Father knew not how to tell the Biſhop of my arrival, and I felt his pain more than my own. As ſoon as that Prelate knew that I was arrived, he ſent his niece who took me in her coach, and carried me to her houſe; but things were only done out of ceremony; and the Biſhop, not having ſeen me yet, knew

knew not what to think of a journey ſo very unexpected, after I had thrice refuſed, though he ſent expreſſes on purpoſe to deſire me to come to him. He was out of humour with me. Nevertheleſs, as he was informed that my deſign was not to ſtay at *Verceil*, but to go to the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*'s houſe, he gave orders for me to be well treated. He could not ſee me till EASTER SUNDAY was over, for he officiated all the eve and all that day. After it was all over, he came in a chaiſe to his niece's houſe to ſee me; and though he underſtood *French* hardly any better than I did *Italian*, he was very well ſatisfied with the converſation he had with me. He appeared to have as much favour for me as he had had of indifference before. The ſecond viſit gained him entirely.

HE conceived as ſtrong a friendſhip for me as if I had been his ſiſter: And his only pleaſure, amidſt his continual occupations, was to come and paſs half an hour with me in ſpeaking of GOD. He wrote to the Biſhop of *Marſeilles* to thank him for having protected me in the perſecution there. He wrote to the Biſhop of *Grenoble*; and he omitted nothing to manifeſt his affectionate regard for me. He now ſeemed to think alone of finding out means to detain me in his dioceſe. He would not hear of my going to ſee the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*. On the contrary he wrote to her to come and ſettle with me in his dioceſe. He ſent Father *La Combe* to her, on purpoſe to exhort her to come; aſſuring her that he would unite us all to make a congregation. The Marchioneſs entered into it readily, and ſo did her daughter too. They would have come with Father *La Combe*, but that the Marchioneſs was ſick. The Biſhop

Biſhop was active and earneſt in collecting and eſtabliſhing a ſociety of us, and found ſeveral pious perſons and ſome very devout young ladies, who were all ready to come to join us: But it was not the will of GOD to fix me thus, but to crucify me yet more.

THE fatigue of travelling made me fall ſick. That girl alſo whom I brought from *Grenoble* fell ſick. Her relations, who were a covetous ſet of people, took it in their heads that, if ſhe ſhould die in my ſervice, I ſhould get her to make a will in my favour. They were much miſtaken: For far from deſiring the property of others, I had given up my own. Her brother, full of this apprehenſion, came with all ſpeed; and the firſt thing he ſpoke to her about, though he found her recovered, was to make a will. That made a great noiſe in *Verceil*; for he wanted her to return with him, but ſhe refuſed. I adviſed her to do what her brother deſired her. He contracted a friendſhip with ſome of the officers of the garriſon, to whom he told ridiculous ſtories, as that I wanted to uſe his ſiſter badly: He pretended ſhe was a perſon of quality, while ſhe was only of a low birth. They gave out what I was ſtill afraid of, viz. *That I was come after* Father *La Combe*. They perſecuted him even on my account. The Biſhop was much troubled at it, but could not remedy it. The friendſhip he had for me increaſed every day; becauſe, as he loved GOD, ſo he did all thoſe whom he thought deſired to love him. As he ſaw me ſo much indiſpoſed, he came to ſee me with aſſiduity and charity, when at leiſure from his occupations. He made me little preſents of fruits and other things of that nature. His relations were jealous of it, ſaying, "I was come

"to

" to ruin him, and to carry off his money into " *France* :" Which was a thing the fartheſt from my thoughts. The Biſhop patiently bore theſe affronts, hoping ſtill to keep me in his dioceſe, when I ſhould be recovered.

FATHER *La Combe* was his prebend and his confeſſor. He eſteemed him highly. GOD made uſe of him to convert ſeveral of the officers and ſoldiers, who, from being men of ſcandalous lives, became patterns of piety. In that place every thing was mixt with croſſes and ſouls gained to GOD. There were ſome of his Friars who, after his example, were advancing toward perfection. Though I neither underſtood their language nor they mine, the Lord made us underſtand each other in what concerned his ſervice. The Rector of the Jeſuits took his time, when Father *La Combe*, was gone out of town, to prove me, as he ſaid. He had ſtudied theological matters, which I did not underſtand. He propounded to me ſeveral queſtions. The Lord inſpired me to anſwer him in ſuch a manner, that he went away both ſurpriſed and ſatisfied. He could not forbear ſpeaking of it.

THE *Bernabites* of *Paris*, or rather Father *De La Mothe* took it in head to try to draw Father *La Combe* from thence to go preach at *Paris*. He wrote to the father-general about it, ſaying, " They had no ſubject at *Paris* to ſupport their " houſe, that their church was deſerted; that it " was a pity to leave ſuch a man as Father *La* " *Combe* in a place where he only corrupted his " language; that it was neceſſary to make his fine " talents appear at *Paris*, where he himſelf could " not bear the burthen of the houſe, if they did not

" not give him an aſſiſtant of ſuch qualifications " and experience." Who would not have thought all this to be ſincere? The Biſhop of *Vercèil*, who was very much a friend to the father-general, having advice hereof, oppoſed it, and anſwered him, " that it would be doing him the greateſt injury " to take from him a man who was exceeding " uſeful to him, and at the time that he had the " greateſt need of him."

THE father-general of the *Bernabites* would not agree to the requeſt of Father *De La Mothe*, for fear of offending the Biſhop of *Vercèil*, in removing from him a man who was ſo neceſſary to him in the preſent poſture of affairs. As to me, my indiſpoſition increaſed. The air, which there is extremely bad, cauſed me a continual cough, with frequent returns of a fever, accompanied with defluxious on the lungs, which obliged me to have much blood taken from me. I grew ſo much worſe that it was thought I could not get over it. The Biſhop was much afflicted to ſee it but, having conſulted the phyſicians, they aſſured him that the air of the place was mortal to me, whereupon he ſaid to me with many tears, " I " had rather have you live, tho' diſtant from me, " than ſee you die here." He gave up his deſign of eſtabliſhing his congregation, for my friend would not ſettle there without me; and the *Genoeſe* lady could not eaſily leave her own city, where ſhe was reſpected. The *Genoeſe* beſought her to ſet up there what the Biſhop of *Vercèil* had wanted her to ſet up near him. It was a congregation almoſt like that of Madam de *Miramion*. When the Biſhop had firſt propoſed this affair, however agreeble it appeared, I had a preſentiment that it would not ſucceed, and that it was not what our Lord required

of me, though I ſubmiſſively yielded to the good propoſal, were it only to acknowledge the many ſpecial favours of this prelate, being aſſured that the Lord would know well how to prevent what he ſhould now require of me. As this good Prelate ſaw he muſt reſign himſelf to let me go, he ſaid to me, "You were willing to be in the di-"oceſe of *Geneva*, and there they perſecuted and "rejected you; and I, who would ſo gladly have "you, cannot keep you." He wrote to Father *La Mothe* "that I ſhould go in the ſpring, as ſoon "as the ſeaſon would permit; that he was ex-"ceeding ſorry to be obliged to let me go; that "he had looked upon me in his dioceſe as an "Angel," with other things, enough to have thrown me into confuſion, if I could have attributed any thing to myſelf. Yet he ſtill hoped to have kept Father *La Combe*, which probably might have been, had not the death of the father-general given it another turn, as I ſhall relate.

HERE it was that I wrote upon the *Apocalypſe*, and that there was given me a greater certainty of all the perſecutions of the moſt faithful ſervants of GOD, according to what I wrote thereof, in reſpect to future times. Here alſo I was ſtrongly moved to write to Madam *De Ch.*——. I did it with great ſimplicity; and what I wrote was like the firſt foundation of what the Lord required of her, having been pleaſed to make uſe of me to help to bring her into his ways, being one to whom I am much united, and by her to others.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

THE Biſhop of *Verceil*'s friend, the father-general of the *Bernabites*, departed this life. As ſoon as he was dead, Father *La Mothe* wrote to the vicar general, who now held his place till another ſhould be elected, renewing his requeſt to have Father *La Combe* as an aſſiſtant. The father, hearing that I was obliged on account of my indiſpoſition to return into *France*, ſent an order to Father *La Combe* to return to *Paris*, and to accompany me in my journey thither, as his doing that would exempt their houſe at *Paris*, already poor, from the expences of ſo long a journey. On the receipt hereof Father *La Combe*, who did not penetrate the poiſon under this fair outſide, conſented thereto; knowing it was my cuſtom to have ſome Eccleſiaſtic with me in travelling. Father *La Combe* went off twelve days before me, in order to tranſact ſome buſineſs, and to wait for me at the paſſage over the mountains, as the place where I had moſt need of an eſcort. I ſet off in Lent, the weather then being very fine. It was a ſorrowful parting to the Prelate. I pitied him; he was ſo much affected both at loſing Father *La Combe* and me. He cauſed me to be attended, at his own expence, as far as *Turin*, giving me a gentleman and one of his Eccleſiaſtics to accompany me.

As ſoon as the reſolution was taken that Father *La Combe* ſhould accompany me, Father *La Mothe* reported every where "that he had been obliged "to do it, to make him return into *France*." He expatiated on the attachment I had for Father *La Combe*, pretending to pity me for it. Upon this every one ſaid, "that I ought to put myſelf

" under the direction of Father *La Mothe*." In the mean time he deceitfully palliated the malignity of his heart, writing letters full of eſteem to Father *La Combe*, and ſome to me of tenderneſs, " deſiring him to bring his dear ſiſter, and to ſerve " her in her infirmities, and in the hardſhips of " ſo long a journey; that he ſhould be ſenſibly " obliged to him for his care," with many other things of the like nature.

I COULD not reſolve to depart without going to ſee my good friend, the Marchioneſs of *Prunai*, notwithſtanding the difficulty of the roads. I cauſed myſelf to be carried thither, it being ſcarce poſſible to go otherwiſe on account of the mountains. She was extremely joyfull at ſeeing me arrive. Nothing could be more cordial than what paſſed between us with abundance of mutual openneſs. It was then that ſhe acknowledged that all I had told her had come to paſs; and a good Eccleſiaſtic, who lives with her, told me the ſame. We made ointments and plaiſters together, and I gave her the ſecret of my remedies. I encouraged her, and ſo did Father *La Combe*, to eſtabliſh an hoſpital in that place; which was done while we were there. I contributed my mite to it, which has ever been bleſt to all the hoſpitals, which have been eſtabliſhed in reliance on providence.

I BELIEVE I had forgot to tell that the Lord had made uſe of me to eſtabliſh one near *Grenoble*, which ſubſiſts without any other fund than the ſupplies of Providence. My enemies made uſe of that afterward to ſlander me, ſaying, " I had " waſted my children's ſubſtance in eſtabliſhing " hoſpitals;" though, far from ſpending any of their ſubſtance, I had even given them my own; and

and though thoſe hoſpitals have been eſtabliſhed only on the fund of divine providence, which is inexhauſtible. But ſo it has been ordered for my good, that all our Lord has made me do to his glory has ever been turned into croſſes to me. I have forgot to particularize a great number both of croſſes and indiſpoſitions; they have been ſo many as to render the ſuppreſſing of ſome of them in a manner inevitable.

As ſoon as it was determined that I ſhould come into *France*, the Lord made known to me, that it was to have greater croſſes than I ever yet had. Father *La Combe* had the like ſenſe. He encouraged me to reſign myſelf to the divine will, and to become a victim offered freely to new ſacrifices. He alſo wrote to me, " Will it not be a thing very " glorious to GOD, if he ſhould make us ſerve, " in that great city, for a ſpectacle to angels and " to men?" I ſet off then with a ſpirit of ſacrifice, to offer myſelf up to new kinds of puniſhments. All along the road ſomething within me repeated the very words of St. PAUL, " I go bound in " the ſpirit unto *Jeruſalem*, not knowing the " things that ſhall befal me there, ſave that the " Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth, ſaying, that bonds and " afflictions abide me: But none of theſe things " move me; neither count I my life dear unto " myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy." Acts xx. 22, 23, 24. I could not forbear to teſtify it to my moſt intimate friends, who tried hard to prevail on me to ſtop; and not to proceed any further. They were all willing to contribute a ſhare of what they had, for my ſettlement there, and to prevent my coming to *Paris*. But I found it my duty to hold on my way, and to ſacrifice myſelf for him who firſt ſacrificed himſelf for me.

AT *Chamberry* we ſaw Father *La Mothe*, who was going to the election of a Father General. Though he affected an appearance of friendſhip, it was not difficult to diſcover that his thoughts were different from his words, and that he had conceived dark deſigns againſt us. I ſpeak not of his intentions, but to obey the command given me to omit nothing. I ſhall neceſſarily be obliged often to ſpeak of him. I could wiſh with all my heart it were in my power to ſuppreſs what I have to ſay of him. If what he has done reſpected only myſelf, I would willingly bury all; but I think I owe it to truth, and to the innocence of Father *La Combe*, ſo cruelly oppreſſed, and grievouſly cruſhed ſo long, by wicked calumnies, by an impriſonment of ſeveral years, which in all probability will laſt as long as life. Though Father *La Mothe* may appear heavily charged in what I ſay of him, I proteſt ſolemnly, and in the preſence of GOD, that I paſs over in ſilence many of his bad actions.

I SAW then his deſign very clearly. Father *La Combe* obſerved it well alſo. Some of my friends apprized us that Father *La Mothe* had evil ſchemes againſt us; but they little thought them to be ſo deſperately atrocious as they turned out. They thought that he would diſcharge Father *La Combe* after he had made him preach, and would for that bring ſome troubles on him. As it had formerly been ſaid to him, *that we ſhould be united together*, ſo now at *Chamberry* it was inwardly declared to him, *that we ſhould be ſeparated*. Father *La Mothe* was at the chapter every day, repeating his deſires to Father *La Combe* not to leave me, but to accompany me all the way to *Paris*. Father *La Combe* aſked him leave to let

let me go alone to *Grenoble*, as he was deſirous to go to ſee his flock at *Tonon*. He made a difficulty of granting him that; ſo much ſincerity he affected.

I WENT off for *Grenoble*. On my arrival there I was ſeized with a fever which held me fifteen days. That good brother, the collector, hereby had exerciſe for his charity. He gave me remedies, making me only take viper broth in all my ſauces, which, with the change of air, gradually removed the diſorder. All thoſe whom GOD had given me, the firſt time I was at *Grenoble*, came to viſit me in my illneſs; and were filled with joy at ſeeing me again. They ſhewed me the letters and retractions of that poor paſſionate girl, and I did not ſee that any body retained an impreſſion againſt me from her ſtories. The Biſhop here manifeſted more kindneſs to me than ever, aſſuring me that he had never believed any thing of them, and made me an offer to ſtay in his dioceſe. They farther preſſed me with new inſtances to induce me to ſtay at the general hoſpital. But it was not the place where GOD required me to be. Every thing announced the Croſs to me. I was penetrated with the impreſſion thereof continually.

THAT good girl of whom I have ſpoken, who had foreſeen ſo many perſecutions to befal me, had again many preſentiments of the croſſes which were about falling in a torrent upon us at *Paris*. She ſaid, "What will ye go to do there, to be "crucified?" All along the road ſuch ſouls as were ſpiritual, and of grace, ſpoke to us of nothing but croſſes; and that impreſſion that *bonds and afflictions awaited me*, was ever preſent.—I come then, oh my ſovereign Love, to ſacrifice

myſelf to thy will. Thou knoweſt what croſſes I have had to bear from my own relations, what an univerſal decry I am under: And yet, through all this perſecution, thou doſt not fail to gain ſouls to thyſelf in every place, and at every time; and I think myſelf overpaid for all my troubles and pains, were they only to procure the ſalvation and perfection of one ſoul.—It was in this place, oh God, that thou waſt willing to erect a theatre of thy will and works by the croſs, and the good to be done to ſouls thereby.

End of the SECOND PART.

March 7, 2006 A.D.
From the Author of
Madame Guyon's
Justifications
in English.
Peter John Parisio
3-1-06

THE LIFE OF LADY GUION.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

SCARCE had I arrived at *Paris*, when I readily diſcovered the black deſigns entertain-

* Now we approach a combination of the wickedeſt plots, and moſt abominable lies, againſt LADY GUION and F. *La Combe*, ſet on foot by F. *La Mothe* her half brother, and his accomplices; amongſt whom we find the official, or judge of the eccleſiaſtical court, and at length Monſieur *De Harlay* Archbiſhop of *Paris*. It ſoon ended in the impriſonment of both theſe faithful martyrs, and dear ſervants of their great Creator. Her fundamental principle being *The pure diſintereſted love of* GOD, *formed in the ſoul by the operation of divine grace through ſubmiſſion, ſelf-renunciation, fervent prayer, faithful obedience to its diſcoveries, and inward communion therewith.* The wicked Eccleſiaſtics hated ſuch a principle or doctrine as tended to wean the people from a blind dependance on them, to teach men to pray to GOD for themſelves, and to love him ſingly for his own ſake, for his wiſdom, goodneſs and perfections; clear from all views of ſelfiſh intereſt. Such Eccleſiaſtics would ſcruple nothing they could deviſe, to deſtroy the publiſher of a free and evangelical doctrine.——As this part is by far the leaſt inſtructive, containing little elſe than the minute account of her various examinations, perſecutions and impriſonments, we have abridged it in ſome places, to leave the more opportunity for a ſpecimen of her Hymns, and that precious Tract on Prayer, which was made the handle of all that violent outcry that was raiſed againſt her.

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ed againſt both Father *La Combe* and me. Father *La Mothe*, who conducted the whole tragedy, artfully diſſembled, according to his cuſtom; flattering me to the face, while he was aiming the keeneſt wounds behind the back. He and his confederates wanted, for their own intereſt, to perſuade me to go to *Montargis*, *(my native place)* hoping thereby to get the guardianſhip of my children, and to diſpoſe of both my perſon and effects. All the perſecutions from Father *La Mothe* and my family have been attended on their part with the views of intereſt; and thoſe againſt Father *La Combe* have ſprung from rage and revenge, becauſe he, as my director, did not oblige me to do what they wanted; as well as out of jealouſy. I might enter into a long detail on this head, ſufficient to convince all the world hereof: But I ſuppreſs, to avoid prolixity. I ſhall only ſay that they threatened to deprive me of what little I had reſerved to myſelf. To this I only replied "That "I would not go to law, that if they were re- "ſolved to take from me the little I had left *(little* "*indeed in compariſon of what I had given up)* "I would ſurrender it entirely to them;" being quite free and willing not only to be poor, but even in the very extremity of want in imitation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I ARRIVED at *Paris* on *Magdalen's* eve 1686, exactly five years after my departure from that city. After Father *La Combe* arrived there, he was ſoon followed and much applauded. I perceived ſome jealouſy in Father *La Mothe* hereupon, but did not think that matters would be carried ſo far as they have been. The greateſt part of the *Bernabites* of *Paris*, and its neighbourhood, joining againſt Father *La Combe*, induced thereto from

from ſeveral cauſes that particularly related to their order. But all their calumnies and evil attempts were overthrown by the unaffected piety of Father *La Combe*, and the good which multitudes reaped from his labours.

I HAD depoſited a little ſum of money in the hands of F. *La Combe* (with the conſent of his Superior) to ſerve for the entrance of a Nun. I thought myſelf obliged in conſcience to do it; for ſhe had, through my means, quitted the new catholicks. It was that young woman whom I mentioned before, (See Part II. chap. v.) whom the Prieſt of *Gex* wanted to win over. As ſhe is beautiful, though very prudent, there always continues a cauſe for fear, when ſuch an one is expoſed without any eſtabliſhment. *La Mothe* wanted to have that money, and ſignified to *La Combe* "that, if he did not make me give him it for a "wall, which he had to rebuild in his convent, "he would make him ſuffer for it." But the latter, who is always upright, anſwered, "that he "could not in conſcience adviſe me to do any "thing elſe but what I had already reſolved, in "favour of that young woman." So now he and the provincial ardently longed to ſatisfy their deſire of revenge. They employed all their thoughts on the means of effecting it.

FOR this purpoſe they ſent to Father *La Combe*, to confeſs a man and a woman, who were united to commit every ſort of crime with impunity, and to perſecute the ſervants of GOD. I think there never was ſuch another artifice. The man counterfeits all ſorts of hands, and is fit for executing any vile deſign. They pretended to be very devout; and among ſo great a number of ſouls,

ſouls, as came from all parts to Father *La Combe* to confeſs, he never diſcerned theſe diabolical ſpirits: GOD ſo permitting it, who had given power to the devil to treat him like JOB.

ONE evening before this, being alone in my chamber, retired in prayer, all on a ſudden my ſtate of childhood ſeemed to be taken from me, to make way for that of my being joined to JESUS CHRIST crucified. What paſſed in this new union of love to that divine object himſelf alone knows. My ſtate ſtill became deeper, as I had born JESUS CHRIST in his denudation and croſſes, ſo now I ſeemed to bear him in crucifixion, which was the finiſhing of all his ſtates. Nothing but experience can make any comprehend what I mean. Theſe words at this time I felt impreſt. *And he was numbered with the tranſgreſſors.* MARK XV. 28. And it was put in my mind that I muſt bear JESUS CHRIST in this ſtate in its whole extent. Oh my Lord if there has not yet been poured upon me enough of reproaches and ignominies, finiſh and conſummate that ſtate to me by the laſt puniſhment. Every thing will be well received as coming from thee. For me to ſuffer for thy name's ſake was the contract of our ſacred marriage: And thy handmaid acknowledges thy goodneſs to her continued to this day, in ſanctifying her ſufferings to the honour of thy worthy name.

I RECEIVED a letter from Father *La Combe*, who writ to me in theſe terms, "The time looks gloomy (ſpeaking of Father *La Mothe*'s humour in regard to him) "I know not when the thun-"der will fall: But every thing ſhall be welcome "from the hand of GOD." In the mean time the huſ-

huſband of that wicked creature, who counterfeited the ſaint, in order to play his game the better left off going to confeſs to Father *La Combe*, but ſent his wife, who ſaid *ſhe was very ſorry that her huſband had quitted that Father*; ſhe told him, *that* GOD *had revealed to her things to come, and that he was going to meet with great perſecutions.* It was eaſy for her to know it, ſince ſhe was planning them with Father *La Mothe*, the Provincial and her huſband.

During this time I went into the country to the houſe of the Ducheſs of C.* There I found ſeveral perſons, whoſe interior progreſs the Lord made me inſtrumental to aſſiſt, and who were of the number of my ſpiritual children. I felt a ſtrong impulſe to communicate to them in ſilence: But as it was ſtrange to ſome of them, admitting natural timidity, I failed in fidelity to what GOD required of me. They read a paſſage of ſcripture, which they interpreted in a manner quite contrary to the ſenſe given me of it, which oppreſſed my ſpirit exceedingly; and the more ſo becauſe I durſt not ſpeak, on account of certain perſons preſent, who held me in a kind of bondage: But after

* It is obſerveable that through this part, after her return to *Paris*, ſhe is very tender of ſetting down the names or ſirnames and titles of any of her friends. The writer of the Archbiſhop of *Cambray*'s life acquaints us that that prelate firſt met with this Lady at the Ducheſs of *Bethune*'s houſe. But ſhe does not once make mention of that Ducheſs, nor of the houſe of *Charoſte*. And though in the IIId Chapter of this part, ſhe informs us that *the more perſecution raged againſt her the more children were given her of the* LORD, yet ſhe mentions the names of none of them, being unwilling thereby to occaſion their being expoſed to, and involved in, her ſufferings.

ter dinner I had an opportunity to ſpeak to ſome of them, which gave ſome relief to my troubled mind. Often from the plenitude which filled my ſoul, I was favoured with a freedom to impart or communicate to my beſt diſpoſed children to our mutual joy and comfort, not only when preſent, but often when abſent. I even felt it to flow from me into their ſouls. When they wrote to me they informed me that at ſuch times they had received abundant infuſions of divine grace. Our Lord had given me that ſpirit of truth, which knows how *to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good.* Even when any preached, or talked of pious ſubjects, I felt in myſelf that which rejected every thing of human conception or opinion, and accepted only that which was the pure truth.

FATHER *La Combe* wrote to me while I was in the country, that he had found an admirable woman (meaning *the counterfeit ſaint* I have mentioned above) and gave me ſome circumſtances reſpecting her, which put me in fear for him. Nevertheleſs as the Lord gave me nothing particular thereupon, I writ to him that I reſigned him to GOD for that, as for the reſt.

THE huſband of that woman, induced by the enemies of Father *La Combe*, wrote defamatory libels, to which they attached the propoſitions of *Molinos*, which had been current for two years paſt in *France*, declaring that they were the ſentiments of Father *La Combe*. Theſe libels were ſpread about in the communities in all parts. Father *La Mothe* and the Provincial, acting as perſons well affected to the church, carried them to the Official, or judge of the Eccleſiaſtic court, who joined in the dark deſign. They ſhewed them

them to the Archbiſhop, ſaying, " it was out of " their zeal, and that they were exceeding ſorry " that one of their fraternity was an heretic, and " as ſuch execrable." They alſo brought me in, but more moderately, ſaying " Father *La* " *Combe* was almoſt always at my houſe," which was very falſe; for I could ſcarce ſee him but at the confeſſional, and that for very ſhort ſpaces. Several other things equally falſe they liberally gave out of us both.

THEY bethought themſelves of one thing further likely to favour their ſcheme. They knew I had been at *Marſeilles*, and thought they obtained a good foundation for a freſh calumny. They counterfeited a letter from a perſon at *Marſeilles* (I think I heard it was from the Biſhop) addreſſed to the Archbiſhop of *Paris*, or to his official, in which they wrote the blackeſt and moſt abominable ſcandal. Father *La Mothe* came to try to draw me into his ſnare, and to make me ſay, in the preſence of the people he had brought, that I had been at *Marſeilles* with Father *La Combe*. " There are, ſaid he, ſhocking accounts ſent a- " gainſt you from the Biſhop of *Marſeilles*. You " have there fallen into great ſcandal with Father " *La Combe*: There are good witneſſes of it," I replied with a ſmile, " The calumny is notably " deviſed: But it had been proper to know firſt " whether Father *La Combe* had been at *Marſeilles*, " for I do not believe he was ever there in his " life. I was while there, with ſuch and ſuch, " and during that time Father *La Combe* was la- " bouring at *Verceil*." He was confounded and went off, ſaying, " There are witneſſes of its be- " ing true". He went immediately to aſk Father *La Combe* if he had not been at *Marſeilles*. He aſſured

assured him he never had been there. They were struck with the disappointment. They then gave out it was *Seisel* which was in the letter. Now this *Seisel* is a place I have never been at, and there is no Bishop there.

Father *La Combe* and the Provincial carried about their libels, with those propositions of *Molinos*, from house to house, saying they were the errors of Father *La Combe*. They plotted together. They determined to take a journey into *Savoy*, to collect and bring memorials against Father *La Combe* and me. The Provincial set off, though but newly returned from visiting a province bordering on *Savoy*, giving a strict charge to Father *La Mothe*, who was enough inclined without it, to spare no pains or cost to ruin Father *La Combe*.

They plotted with the Official, a man well versed in such artifices. They suborned that woman. She told Father *La Combe* "that she "had heard wonderful things of me, which had "given her an ardent desire to see me." As she farther told him, *that she was in great want and distress*, he sent her to me for my charity; I gave her half a louis d'or. At that time she was a stranger to me; but, after a little converse with her, I was struck with horror: Yet I kept it to myself.

A few days after, she came again to ask me for something to get herself bled. I told her, "I "had a maid who could do it well, whom I "would get to do it for her." She replied, that "she was not a person to be bled by any but a surgeon." I then gave her a fifteen penny piece. She took it with disdain, then went and threw it to Father *La Combe*, asking *if she was a person to be put*

put off with fifteen-pence. But she learned that evening, from her husband, that the time, not yet ripe for discovery, required longer dissimulation. She then came again to Father *La Combe* to beg his pardon, saying, "it was a rash fit of "passion which made her act as she did." She asked him also for the fifteen-pence. He told me then nothing of all this; but I had a certainty that she was a wicked hypocrite, bent on some bad design: And so I told Father *La Combe*, who chid me for it, saying, "It was only my own imagi-"nation, that I wanted charity, for she was a "religious woman."

There came to me a virtuous young woman a stranger, who told me she thought herself obliged, as she knew I was intimate with Father *La Combe*, to aprize me that he confessed a woman who deceived him. She told me of base things that woman had done, and of her thefts at *Paris*. I desired her to tell them to him herself. She said she had attempted it; but he told her it was acting not according to charity. In a certain shop that vile woman spoke ill of him. They let him know it, but he seemed not to believe it. She sometimes came to my house. I turned pale at the sight of her. My domesticks perceived it, especially one who felt the same horrors as I did.

CHAP. II. and III.

[*In these Chapters she relates how the vile persons who were suborned against her, were detected by F. La Combe, and particularizes many of the odious scandals which they forged about her. How they wanted to frighten her with the terrors of Memorials being drawn out against her, accusing her of*

giving into the errors of ſome perſons condemned by the Church, and would have perſuaded her to a ſudden flight, in order that they might thereby have the fuller opportunity of proving her guilty. She continues thus :]

At length *La Mothe* took off the maſk, and ſaid to me in the church, before *La Combe* " It is " now, my ſiſter, that you muſt think of fleeing, " you are charged with crimes of a deep dye." I was not moved in the leaſt, but replied with my uſual tranquillity, " If I am guilty of ſuch crimes, " I cannot be too ſeverely puniſhed; wherefore I " will not flee or go out of the way. I have made " an open profeſſion of dedicating myſelf to God " entirely: And if I have done things offenſive " to him, whom I would wiſh both to love, and " to cauſe to be loved by the whole world, even " at the expence of my life, I ought by my pu- " niſhment to be made an example to the world: " But if I am innocent, for me to flee is not the " way for my innocence to be believed."

[*She here gives a detail of the artifices and ſnares ſet on foot to ruin F. La Combe; how they miſrepreſented him to the King, and procured an order to confine him in his convent till he was examined. How they concealed this order from him, and then made ſeveral pretences, to bring him publickly out. How they then obtained to have him arreſted as a Rebel to the King's orders, and confined to the Baſtile, and goes on thus :*]

—Tho' on his trial he appeared quite innocent, and they could not find any thing whereupon to ground a condemnation, yet they made the King believe he was a dangerous man in the article of religion.

religion. He was then ſhut up in a certain fortreſs of that great priſon for life: But as his enemies heard that the captains in that fortreſs eſteemed him, and treated him kindly, they got him removed into a much worſe place. God, who beholds every thing, will reward every man according to his works. I know by an interior communication that he is very well content, and fully reſigned to God.

La Mothe now endeavoured more than ever to induce me to flee, aſſuring me that, if I went to *Montargis*, I ſhould be out of all trouble; but that, if I did not, I ſhould pay for it. He inſiſted on my taking himſelf for my director, which I could not agree to. He decried me wherever he went, and writ to his brethren to do the ſame. They writ me very abuſive letters, and particularly that, if I did not put myſelf under his direction, I was undone. I have the letters by me ſtill. One Father deſired me in this caſe to make a virtue of neceſſity. Nay ſome adviſed me to pretend to put myſelf under his direction, and to deceive him; whereas I abhorred the thought of a diſguiſe or deceit. I bore every thing with the greateſt tranquillity, without taking any care to juſtify or defend myſelf, leaving it entirely to God to order as he ſhould pleaſe about me: And herein he was graciouſly pleaſed to increaſe the peace of my ſoul, while every one ſeemed to cry againſt me, and to look on me as an infamous creature, except thoſe few who knew me well by a near union of ſpirit. At church I heard people behind me exclaim againſt me, and even ſome prieſts ſay, " It was neceſſary to caſt me out of the church." I left myſelf to God without reſerve, being quite ready to endure the moſt rigorous pains and tortures, if ſuch were his will.

I NEVER made any ſolicitation either for Father *La Combe* or myſelf, though charged with that among other things. Willing to owe every thing to GOD, I have no dependence on any creature. I would not have it ſaid that any but GOD had made *Abraham* rich. Gen. xiv. 23. To loſe all for him is my beſt gain: And to gain all without him would be my worſt loſs. Though at this time ſo general an outcry was raiſed againſt me; GOD did not fail to make uſe of me to gain many ſouls to himſelf. The more perſecution raged againſt me the more children were given me, on whom the Lord conferred great favours through his poor handmaid.

One muſt not judge of the ſervants of GOD by what their enemies ſay of them, nor by their being oppreſſed under calumnies without any reſource. JESUS CHRIST expired under pangs. GOD uſes the like conduct towards his deareſt ſervants, to render them conformable to his ſon, *in whom he is always well pleaſed*. But few place that conformity where it ought to be. It is not in voluntary pains or auſterities, but in thoſe which are ſuffered in a ſubmiſſion ever equal to the will of GOD, in a renunciation of our whole ſelves, to the end that GOD may be our all in all, conducting us according to his views, and not our own, which are generally oppoſite to his. In fine, all perfection conſiſts in this entire conformity with JESUS CHRIST, not in ſhining things which men eſteem and cry up. It will only be ſeen in eternity who are the true friends of GOD. Nothing pleaſes him but JESUS CHRIST, and that which bears his mark or character.

THEY were continually preſſing me to flee, tho' the Archbiſhop had ſpoken to myſelf, and bidden me

me not to leave *Paris*. But they wanted to render both me and Father *La Combe* criminal by my flight. They knew not how to make me fall into the hands of the Official: For if they accuſed me of crimes, it muſt be before other judges: And any other judge would have ſeen my innocence; and the falſe witneſſes would have run the riſque of ſuffering for it. They continually ſpread the outcry of horrible crimes; the Official aſſured me that he had heard no mention of any; for he was afraid leſt I ſhould retire out of his juriſdiction. They then made the King believe "that I "was an heretic; that I carried on a literary cor-"reſpondence with *Molinos* (I, who never knew "there was a *Molinos* in the world, till the Ga-"zette had told me it) that I had wrote a dange-"rous book; and that on thoſe accounts it would "be neceſſary to iſſue forth an order to put me in "a convent, that they might examine me; that, "as I was a dangerous perſon, it would be pro-"per for me to be locked up, to be allowed no "commerce with any one; that I held aſſem-"blies," which was very falſe. To ſupport this calumny my hand-writing was counterfeited, and a letter forged as from me, importing, that I had "great deſigns, but feared that they ſhould prove "abortive, by the impriſonment of Father *La* "*Combe*, for which reaſon I had left off holding "aſſemblies at my own houſe, being too cloſely "watched; but that I would hold them at the "houſes of ſuch and ſuch perſons, in ſuch and "ſuch ſtreets;" who are people that I do not know, nor ever before had heard named. This forged letter they ſhewed the King, and upon it an order was given for my impriſonment.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

THIS order would have been put in execution two months ſooner than it was, had I not fallen very ſick. I had inconceivable pains and a fever. Some thought that I had an impoſthume in my head. The pangs I had for five weeks made me delirious. I had alſo a pain in my breaſt and a violent cough. Twice I received, as I was thought near expiring, *the holy Sacrament*. One of my friends had acquainted Father *La Mothe*, (not knowing him to have any hand in F. *La Combe*'s impriſonment) that ſhe had ſent me a certificate from the inquiſition in ſaid Father *La Combe*'s favour, having heard that his own was loſt. This was a very good piece: For they made the King believe that he had run away from the inquiſition; and this ſhewed the contrary.

FATHER *La Mothe* then came to me, when I was under exceſſive pains, counterfeiting all the affection and tenderneſs in his power, and telling me "that the affair of Father *La Combe* was go-"ing on very well, that he was juſt ready to come "out of priſon with honour, that he was ve-"ry glad of it; that if he had only this certifi-"cate, he would be delivered preſently. Give me it then, *ſaid he*, and it will be done," At firſt I made a difficulty of doing it. "What! "*ſaid he*, will you be the cauſe of ruining poor "Father *La Combe*, having it in your power to "ſave him, and cauſe us that affliction, for want "of what you have in your hands." I yielded, ordering it to be brought and given him. He ſuppreſſed it, and gave out that it was loſt. It never could be got from him again. The Ambaſſador from the Court of *Turin* ſent a Page to me for this certificate, deſigning to make the proper uſe

uſe of it to ſerve Father *La Combe*. I referred him to Father *La Mothe*. The Page went to him and aſked him for it. He denied I had given him it; ſaying, "Her brain is diſordered which makes "her imagine it." The Page came back to me and told me his anſwer: The perſons in my chamber bore witneſs that I had given it to him. Yet all ſignified nothing: It could not be got out of his hands; but on the contrary he inſulted me, and ſet others alſo to do it, though I was ſo weak that I ſeemed to be at the very gates of death.

THEY told me they only waited for my recovery to clap me in priſon. He made his brethren believe that I had treated him ill. They writ to me; one, "that it was for my crimes that I ſuf-"fered; and that I ſhould put myſelf under the "conduct of Father *La Mothe* or otherwiſe I ſhould "repent it;" another, that I was frantic and ought "to be bound; lethargic, and to be awakened; "a monſter of pride ſince I would not ſuffer my-"ſelf to be cleanſed and conducted by Father *La* "*Mothe*." Such was my daily feaſt in the extremity of my pains; deſerted of my friends, and oppreſt of my enemies; the former being aſhamed of me, through the calumnies which were forged and induſtriouſly ſpread; the latter let looſe to perſecute me; under all which I kept ſilence, leaving myſelf to the Lord. To Father *La Mothe's* inſults I returned mildneſs, and made him preſents.

THERE was not any kind of infamy, error, ſorcery, or ſacrilege, of which they did not accuſe me. As ſoon as I was able to be carried to the Church in a chair, I was told I muſt ſpeak to the Prebend. (It was a ſnare concerted betwixt Father *La Mothe* and the Canon at whoſe houſe I

lodged) I ſpoke to him with much ſimplicity, and he approved of what I ſaid. Yet two days after they gave out that I had uttered many things, and accuſed many perſons; and from hence they procured the baniſhment of ſundry perſons with whom they were diſpleaſed, perſons whom I had never ſeen or heard of. They were men of honour. One of them was baniſhed, becauſe he ſaid, " my little book is a good one." It is remarkable that they ſay nothing to thoſe who prefixed their approbations, and that, far from condemning the book, it has been reprinted ſince I have been in priſon, and advertiſements of it poſted up at the Archbiſhop's palace, and all over *Paris*. In regard to others, when they find faults in their books, they condemn the books and leave the perſon at liberty: But as for me, my book is approved, ſold and ſpread, while I am kept a priſoner for it.

THE ſame day that thoſe gentlemen were baniſhed I received a *lettre de cachet*, or ſealed order and addreſſed to me, to repair to the Covent of *the Viſitation* of St. *Mary*'s in the ſubburb of St. *Antoine*. I received it with a tranquillity which ſurpriſed the bearer exceedingly. He could not forbear expreſſing it, having ſeen the extreme ſorrow of thoſe who were only baniſhed. He was ſo touched with it as to ſhed tears. And though his order was to carry me off directly, he was not afraid to truſt me, but left me all the day, deſiring me to repair to St. *Mary*'s in the evening. On that day many of my friends came to ſee me and found me very chearful, which ſurpriſed ſuch of them as knew my caſe. I could not ſtand, I was ſo weak, having the fever every night, it being only a fortnight ſince I was thought to be expiring. I imagined they would leave me my daughter and maid to ſerve me. My daughter was moſt at my heart, having coſt me much care in her education. I had endeavoured, with divine aſſiſtance, to root out her faults, and to diſpoſe her to have no will of her own; which is the beſt diſpoſition for a child. She was not yet twelve years of age.

CHAP. V.

ON the twenty-ninth of *January* 1688, I went to St. *Mary*'s. There they let me know I muſt neither have my daughter nor a maid to ſerve me, but muſt be locked up alone in a chamber. Indeed it touched me to my heart when my daughter was taken from me. They would neither allow her to be in that houſe, nor any body to bring me any news of her. I was then obliged to ſacrifice my daughter, as if ſhe were mine no longer. The people of the houſe were prepoſſeſſed with ſo frightful an account of me, that they looked at me with horror. For my jailor they ſingled out a Nun, who they thought would treat me with the greateſt rigour, and they were not miſtaken therein.

THEY aſked me who was now my confeſſor. I named him; but he was ſeized with ſuch a fright that he denied it; though I could have produced many perſons who had ſeen me at his confeſſional. So then they ſaid they had caught me in a lie; and I was not to be truſted. My acquaintance then ſaid they knew me not, and others were at liberty to invent ſtories, and *ſay all manner of evil of me*. The woman, appointed for my keeper, was gained over by my enemies, to torment me as an heretic, an enthuſiaſt, one crackbrained and an hypocrite. GOD alone knows

knows what ſhe made me ſuffer. As ſhe ſought to ſurpriſe me in my words, I watched them, to be more exact in them; but I fared the worſe for it. I made more ſlips and gave her more advantages over me thereby, beſide the trouble in my own mind for it. I then left myſelf as I was, and reſolved, though this woman would bring me to the ſcaffold, by the falſe reports ſhe was continually carrying to the Prioreſs, that I would ſimply reſign myſelf to my lot; ſo I re-entered into my former condition.

Soon after I came into this convent I had a dream, in which I ſaw the ſky opening all on a ſudden, and as it were a ſhower of bright fire. There were with me a multitude of people, all of whom betook themſelves to flight, in order to eſcape it. As to me I proſtrated myſelf upon the ground, and ſaid, "Oh my God, it is I who am the victim of thy juſtice." I ſoon awaked full of certainty that I ſhould earn this title of *victim of divine juſtice*. Monſieur Charon the Official and Doctor of *Sorbonne* came four times to examine me. Our Lord did me the favour which he promiſed to his apoſtles, viz. to make me anſwer much better than if I ſtudied. Luke xxi. 14, 15. They ſaid to me, "if I had explained myſelf, as "I now did, all along in that *ſhort and eaſy method of prayer*, I ſhould not now have been "here." My laſt examination was about a counterfeit letter, which they read and let me ſee. I told them the hand was no way like mine. They "ſaid, it was only a copy; they had the original "at home." I deſired a ſight of it, but could not obtain it. I told them, "I never wrote it, "nor did I know the perſon to whom it was addreſſed; but they took ſcarce any notice of what I ſaid.

After

After this letter was read the Official turned to me, and ſaid, "you ſee Madam, that after "ſuch a letter there was foundation enough for "impriſoning you." "Yes Sir ſaid I, if I had "wrote it." I ſhewed them its falſehoods and inconſiſtencies, but all in vain. I was left two months, and treated worſe and worſe, before either of them came again to me. Till then I had always ſome hope that, ſeeing my innocence, they would do me juſtice: But now I ſaw that they did not want to find me innocent, but to make me appear guilty.

The Official alone came the next time, and told me, "I muſt ſpeak no more of the falſe letter; "that it was nothing." "How nothing, *ſaid I* "to counterfeit a perſons writing, and to make "one appear an enemy to the ſtate!" He replied, "We will ſeek out the Author of it." "The "Author *ſaid I*, is no other than the Scrivener "Gautier." He then demanded where the papers were which I wrote on the ſcriptures. I told him, "I would give them up when I ſhould "be out of priſon; but was not willing to tell with "whom I had lodged them."

About three or four days before *Eaſter* he came again, with the Doctor, and a verbal proceſs drawn up againſt me for rebelling, in not giving up my papers. Copies of my wrtings were then put into their hands; for I had not the originals. I know not where thoſe who got them from me have put them: But I am firm in the faith that they will all be preſerved, in ſpite of the ſtorm. The prioreſs aſked the Official how my affair went. He ſignified very well, and that I ſhould ſoon be diſcharged: And this became the common talk; but I had a preſentiment of the contrary.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

I HAD an inexpreſſible ſatisfaction and joy in ſuffering, and being a priſoner. The confinement of my body made me better reliſh the freedom of my mind. St. *Joſeph*'s day was to me a memorable day; for then my ſtate had more of heaven than of earth beyond what any expreſſion can reach. I expected from it that there was ſome new cup for me to drink, as the glorious transfiguration of CHRIST was an introduction to his paſſion; depriving himſelf for the reſt of his life of the effuſions of the divinity, the ſupports of the human life, which he had kept before, the beatitude being ſuſpended, the ſufferings unabated, unrelieved: In like manner I may ſay it fell out to me, though unworthy to participitate the ſtates of JESUS CHRIST, and with the infinite diſproportion of a poor weak creature to him who was both GOD and man. This day of *St. Joſeph*, who is a ſaint to whom I am intimately united, was like a day of transfiguration for me. It ſeemed to me that I had then nothing left of the creature; but that time was followed as it were with a ſuſpenſion of every favour then enjoyed, a diſpenſation of new ſufferings. I was obliged to ſacrifice myſelf anew, and to drink the very dregs of the bitter draught. The dream I had had, wherein all the indignation of GOD fell upon me, came up again in my mind.

I NEVER had any gall of reſentment againſt my perſecutors, though I well knew them, their ſpirit and their actions. JESUS CHRIST and the ſaints ſaw their perſecutors, and at the ſame time ſaw *that they could have no power except it were given them from above.* John xix. 11. Loving the ſtrokes which

which GOD gives, one cannot hate the hand which he makes uſe of to ſtrike with. A few day after the Official come, and told me he gave me the liberty of the Cloyſter, that is, to go and come in the houſe. They were now very induſtrious in urging my daughter to conſent to a marriage, which, had it taken place, would have been her ruin. To ſucceed herein, they had placed her with a relation of that gentleman whom they wanted her to marry. I had all my confidence in GOD, that he would not permit it to be acompliſhed, as that perſon had no tincture of Chriſtianity, being abandoned in his principles and morals!

[*Here ſhe continues to relate the various ſnares, by which they wanted to induce her to give up her daughter, in order to obtain her own releaſe, and the viciſſitudes ſhe ſuffered.—Now promiſing acquittance and liberty, again threatening confinement for life, and even Death on the Scaffold.*]

CHAP. VII.

SOON after the Official and Doctor came to tell the Prioreſs I muſt be cloſely locked up. She repreſented to them that the chamber I was in was ſmall, having an opening to the light or air, only on one ſide, through which the ſun ſhone all the day long, and that being the month of July it muſt ſoon be my death. They paid no regard thereto. She aſked why I muſt be thus cloſely locked up. They ſaid, "I had commit-" ted horrible things in her houſe, even within " the laſt month, and had ſcandalized the Nuns." She proteſted the contrary, and aſſured them the whole community had received great edification from me, and could not but admire my patience and moderation. But it was all in vain: And the

the poor woman could not refrain from tears, at a forgery ſo remote from the truth.

THEY then ſent for me, and told me, "I had "done baſe things in the laſt month." I aſked what things? They would not tell me. I ſaid then, "that I would ſuffer as long and as much "as it ſhould pleaſe GOD; that this affair was "begun on forgeries againſt me, and ſo conti-"nued.—That GOD was witneſs of every thing." The Doctor told me, to take GOD for a witneſs in ſuch a thing was a crime. I replied, "Nothing "in the world could hinder me from having re-"courſe to GOD." I then retired, and was ſhut up more cloſely than at firſt: And becauſe there was no key, they faſtened the chamber door with a piece of wood, or bar acroſs it. I had an interior joy at this new humiliation. Oh what pleaſure, my ſupreme Love, to be for thee in the moſt abject condition!

[*Here ſhe continues to relate the ſeverity of her treatment; how ſhe was ſhut up in that very ſmall chamber in the month of July, till ſhe was abſolutely at the point of death, being thrown into a violent fever, and almoſt ſtifled with the cloſeneſs of the place, having a defluction and ſore throat, before ſhe was permitted to have any aſſiſtance.*]

IN the time of the antient law there were ſeveral of the Lord's martyrs, who ſuffered for aſſerting and truſting in the one true GOD. In the primitive church of CHRIST the martyrs ſhed their blood, for maintaining the truth of JESUS CHRIST crucified: But now there are martyrs of the holy Spirit, who ſuffer for their dependance on it, for maintaining its reign in ſouls, and for being victims of the divine Will.

IT

IT is this ſpirit which *is to be poured out on all fleſh*, as ſaith the prophet JOEL. The martyrs of JESUS CHRIST have been glorious martyrs, he having drank up the confuſion of that martyrdom: But the martyrs of the holy Spirit are martyrs of reproach and ignominy. The devil no more exerciſes his power againſt their faith or belief, but directly attacks the dominion of the holy Spirit, oppoſing its celeſtial motion in ſouls, and diſcharging his hatred on the bodies of thoſe whoſe minds he cannot hurt. Oh holy Spirit, a Spirit of love, let me ever be ſubjected to thy will, and, as a leaf is moved before the wind, ſo let me by thy divine breath. As the impetuous wind breaks all that reſiſts it, ſo break all that oppoſes thy empire, even the towering cedars, which ſtand in ſuch oppoſition.

IT is ſaid of JESUS CHRIST that he *yielded up the ghoſt*, or ſent forth his Spirit. (MATT. xxvii. 50.) This was both the conſummation of his pains, and the conſummation of all ages, even of all things, which through his Spirit ſhall be done in the whole world. Hence he ſaid, *it is finiſhed*, or conſummated (John xix. 37) Since his death, *St. Paul* has told us that *he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to* GOD *his Father*, (1 Cor. xv. 24) to the end that GOD by his Spirit may reign on earth. JESUS CHRIST taught to pray *that the kingdom of* GOD *may come, and his will be done on earth as in heaven*, which implies the ſubjection of the whole will in the creature to that of the creator, even without any reluctance, heſitation or delay. Then will his reign be conſummated, and *his enemies become his footſtool*. Oh thus may all be reduced into one, though it be through much deſtruction of what oppoſes this kingdom, according to CHRIST's words, viz. *I came not to ſend peace but a ſword.*

a ſword. Mat. x. 34. *I am come to ſend fire on earth: And what will I, if it be already kindled?* Luke xii. 49.

CHAP. VIII.

[*She begins this Chapter with relating their artifices to compel her to a formal retraction of all the crimes, of which ſhe was accuſed, and to impeach La Combe, as the original deceiver. When baffled in this, they framed ſome execrable forgeries, by which they made her accuſe herſelf of the moſt abominable crimes, and impeach La Combe as the perſon who had ſeduced and deceived her.*]

THOUGH Father *La Combe* be under cloſe confinement, we do not fail to communicate in GOD. Many ſpiritual perſons, to whom the Lord has united me by the tie of maternity, experience the ſame communication, though in my abſence, and find in this union the remedy or relief of their pains. Oh GOD, who haſt choſen in this poor creature to erect the throne of thy *goodneſs and ſeverity*, thou knoweſt that I paſs over many things, either for want of remembering, or of knowing how to expreſs them. I have ſaid what I could, and that with the utmoſt ſincerity and entire truth. Though I have been obliged to deſcribe the procedure of thoſe who perſecute me, I have not done it out of reſentment, ſince I love them at my heart, and pray for them, leaving to GOD the care of defending me, and delivering me out of their hands, without making any movement of my own for it. I have apprehended and believed that GOD would have me write every thing ſincerely, that his name may be glorified; that the things done in ſecret againſt his ſervants ſhould one day be publiſhed on the houſe tops; for

for the more they ſtrive to conceal them from the eyes of men, the more will GOD in his own time make them all manifeſt.

AT preſent I experience two ſtates, that of CHRIST crucified and of his infant ſtate, the one of daily croſſes, very violent, without number or intermiſſion; the other ſo child-like, ſimple and candid, that methinks if my ſoul were to be impreſſed any way, there could come nothing out of it but candor, innocence, ſubmiſſion and patience. Oh my GOD, methinks, thou haſt made of me a prodigy, a monument of thy goodneſs and wonderful works! There is wrought in me ſomething of the original, which is communicated to me after a manner inexplicable, which nothing but experience can comprehend; 'Tis then to thee, O MY LOVE, that I render what I have writ for thee,

DONE this 22d of Auguſt 1688, aged forty years, in my priſon, which I love and cheriſh, as I find it ſanctified by MY LOVE.

I FORGOT to tell that I had *a ſenſe* of the ſtate of the ſouls which came to me, and of that of the perſons which were given me, how far diſtant ſoever they were from me. By *ſenſe* I mean an interior impreſſion of what they were, eſpecially ſuch as paſſed for ſpiritual. I knew preſently whether they were upright or artful, their degree, or their ſelf-love, for which I felt a rejection. I knew when they were ſtout in themſelves, and ſupported by the virtue they imagined they had, by which they meaſured others, and condemned in their minds thoſe who were not like themſelves, though more perfect. Theſe perſons who think themſelves righteous, and are thought ſo by others, are much more unacceptable to GOD, than

ſome ſinners from weakneſs, who are looked on with contempt; whom nevertheleſs GOD favours with great mercies: Which will not be fully ſeen but at the day of judgment. He beholds *afar off* thoſe ſouls which are ſo exalted and full of themſelves, though they fancy themſelves humble, becauſe they appear in ſome acts of humility, which for the moſt part increaſe the high opinion they have of themſelves. If they were to ſuffer ſome real humiliation, then would appear their want of ſolidity. Oh if people knew how much GOD loves the true littleneſs of ſpirit in the creature, they would behold it with amazement. When they ſpeak to me of ſome perſons of piety, my inward ſenſe rejects thoſe who are not in the low ſtate I have mentioned; and admits thoſe who are ſubject to GOD in that ſtate. There is ſomething in me which refuſes the evil, however gloſſy or covered; and greatly loves the true and ſolid good, I find it is the ſame even in the practice of virtues; or what paſs for ſuch. This ſpirit diſcerns the real virtue from that which only wears its likeneſs. Of ſuch as have left this life and are now accounted ſaints, it eſteems thoſe moſt who have been moſt annihilated, and whom GOD has moſt ſanctified by his own operation; it does not join in the world's cry, in attributing to others that which they wanted.

IT was thouht I was about coming out of priſon, and every thing ſeemed to tend toward it. But the LORD gave me a ſenſe that, far from being willing to deliver me, their conſultations were only laying new ſnares to ruin me more effectually, to make Father *La Mothe* known to the King, and eſteemed by him. The 22d of Auguſt I waked under an impreſſion of JESUS CHRIST in an agony, ſeeing the counſel of the Jews againſt him.

I knew

I knew that none but GOD could deliver me out of priſon, and I was ſatisfied that he would do it one day by his own right hand, though ignorant of the manner, and leaving it wholly to himſelf.

ONE day thinking why I could not invoke any of the ſaints, though united to them in GOD, it was put into my mind, that domeſticks had need of credit and interceſſors, while the ſpouſe readily obtains every thing without aſking any thing. He of his infinite goodneſs prevents her. Oh how little known is the holy author of all good! They examine my actions. They cry out that I do not ſay over my chaplet or beads, that I have no devotion for the holy Virgin. Oh divine MARY, thou knoweſt how my heart is ſingly devoted to GOD, and the union which he has formed betwixt us in himſelf. I can do nothing but what he directs, depending wholly on his will.

[She here deſcribes the manner in which Providence conducted matters, ſo as that ſhe was vindicated to Madam *Maintenon*, and at length obtained her releaſe.]

CHAP. IX.

[In this Chapter ſhe relates how they wanted to exact captious conceſſions, and falſe retractions from her; but that at length ſhe was honourably ſet at liberty, and a few days afterwards had her firſt interview with the Abbe *Fenelon*, to whom ſhe is united, as *Jonathan* to *David*, and ſtiles him her ſpiritual child.]

CHAP. X.

I Have thought of writing no more of what regards my interior ſtate, not having words to expreſs it, being ſo perfectly ſeparated from all that can fall under ſentiment, expreſſion, or human conception.

I SHALL only ſay that, after being raiſed up again I found in myſelf, ſome years before my being put into what is called the apoſtolic ſtate, or miſſion for the help of others, all ſelfiſhneſs conſumed in the purgatory I had paſſed through. I found myſelf in a felicity like that of the bleſſed. Nothing here below touched me. At preſent I ſee not any thing on earth which can give me pain in regard to myſelf.

THE happineſs of ſuch a ſoul can never be comprehended without experience! Thoſe who die in being employed in thus helping their neighbour, die in the ſupreme felicity, though loaden with exterior croſſes.

WHEN it pleaſed GOD to honour me with his miſſion, he ſhewed me that the true father in JESUS CHRIST, the Apoſtolic Paſtor, ought like him to ſuffer for men, to bear their infirmities, and to be cloathed with their very weakneſſes. He inclines the heart to what he demands, imprinting on it words like theſe, " I was happy, " I poſſeſſed glory, I was GOD: But I quitted it " all, and ſubjected myſelf to pain, contempt " ignominy and puniſhment. I became a man " to ſave men. If thou art willing to finiſh *what* " *is behind of my ſuffering*, and that I form in " thee an extenſion of my quality of Redeemer, thou

" thou muſt conſent to loſe the happineſs thou en- " joyeſt, to be ſubject to weakneſſeſs and miſe- " ries, to bear the infirmities of thoſe with whom " I ſhall entruſt thee, to pay their debts, and in " ſhort to be expoſed not only to their interior " pangs, from which (as to thyſelf) thou haſt " been delivered, but to all the moſt violent " perſecutions. If I had continued in my private " life, I had never ſuffered any perſecution. " None are perſecuted but ſuch as are employed " in the help of ſouls.

HE ſhewed me that he called me not, as ſome had thought, to gain exterior proſelytes to the church, but ſingly to the propagation of his own good ſpirit. He does not ſo much deſign me for the firſt converſion of ſinners, as to make thoſe who are touched with a right deſire to enter into perfect converſion. Since GOD has been pleaſed to beſtow on me part of the Apoſtolic ſtate, what have I not ſuffered? And yet my love for thoſe ſouls, inſtead of deſiring to be freed from it, has increaſed in proportion to my increaſe of ſuffering for them, even till their entire purification. Then the union, which has often been covered with clouds, becomes like a clear air, every where penetrated with the light of the ſun. As to the ſouls which are the moſt conſummate in the love of GOD, living among men, their exterior is covered with apparent weakneſſeſs, which (like a poor ſkin) hide infinite treaſures from the view of others, and tend to ſave them from being loſt.

Upon firſt entering into the new life men find themſelves ſo different from the reſt of mankind, and think ſo differently from what they have been uſed to do, that the faults and errors of their neighbours become inſupportable to them. The

ſoul is ready to cry out, *Now* Lord *letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* Luke ii. 29. But in regard to ſuch as have the painful taſk of conducting others, if the ſouls conducted could penetrate, acroſs their feeble outſide appearance, the depth of their grace, they would look on them with too high a reſpect, and would not die to the ſupport which ſuch a conduct would give them. If the Jews could have penetrated through the exterior of JESUS CHRIST, common with other men, they never had perſecuted him, but would have been in a continual admiration. Theſe perſons then are a paradox both in their own eyes and in the eyes of thoſe who behold them: For they ſee no more than a plain and homely appearance in them. Celeſtial wiſdom flows from their heart and mouth, like a ſpring of divine ſap, from trees pregnant therewith, which communicates life to an infinite number of branches, though one ſees on them only a courſe and moſſy rind. Hence men who preſume to judge of theſe ſouls are very liable to err in judgment, and, as ſays the Apoſtle *Jude*, like *filthy dreamers, to deſpiſe dominion and ſpeak evil of dignities, of things which they know not*, (*Jude. v.* 3. 10) the holy myſteries of GOD, revealed by him only to the ſouls which he has prepared to receive them.

SUCH ſouls can only ſpeak and write through the actual light of the preſent moment, which laſts no longer than it is neceſſary to ſpeak, or write; without being able to ſee or think afterward on what they ſaw before, unleſs the actual light be reſtored to them. It is like a perſon to whom one opens a cabinet full of treaſures, who ſees them ſo long as it is open, but ſees nothing of them when it is ſhut up again. Only the ſpouſe *opens and none can*

can ſhut; and when he ſhuts none can open. Such a ſoul cares neither for honour nor wealth nor life. If it were not ſo, it could not ſerve other ſouls in the whole extent of the deſigns of GOD.

IF GOD retained theſe hidden ſouls in the ſecret of his preſence, they would be ſcreened from the perſecutions of men: But how willingly would they ſuffer fire and rack for a ſingle ſoul! No wonder if the Devil ſtir up all quarters of his dominion againſt Apoſtolic ſouls; he knows that ſuch a ſoul, were it hearkened to, would deſtroy his empire. All exterior devotions hurt but little; for he makes repriſals on the ſelf-love of ſuch devotions, for what they make him loſe by the regularity of their obſervances: But there is no gain for him to make on a ſoul devoted to the truth of GOD, and to his pure love; who lets *ſelf* be deſtroyed by the ſovereign power of GOD. The devil cannot approach theſe ſouls but at a diſtance. The rage with which he is fired againſt them has no bounds. To be devoted to GOD, one muſt have no choice or preference of eſteem for one action above another. People form to themſelves ideas, and imagine that a ſoul is given to GOD in ſome particular manner: And when they ſee any thing contrary to thoſe ideas, they conclude GOD is not there, and yet it is often where he is moſt. He ſets no value on any virtue of our forming. A ſtate which depends on any good, which is capable of being conceived or diſtinguiſhed, is a virtuous ſtate, but not a divine ſtate.

THE ſaints of the Lord are ſanctified, not like other ſaints, by the practice of ſome virtues; but by the Lord himſelf, and by an infinite ſuppleneſs to every intimation of his will, even in the ſmalleſt things, which is the real poſſeſſion of eve-

ry virtue. Theſe are ſaints after his manner, and not after that of men. Let there not be any virtue or holineſs for me, but what flows from this ſpring. Thus may I, and the children whom GOD has given me, go on from faith to faith! Though the ſoul which is loſt in GOD has an infinite ſuppleneſs of obedience to his will, yet it is more particularly attracted toward other ſouls in which it finds an harmonious correſpondence, and on the other hand appears reſerved, and to have pain to ſpeak before others, being ſenſible of their repugnant diſpoſitions. One muſt judge of ſouls, even in the childs ſtate, more by what GOD has done for them than by what one ſees; for otherwiſe one would judge of them more from one's own ſtate than from the ſtate which they were in. What ſeems weak in GOD far ſurpaſſes the greateſt force in men. It is what cauſes the joint alliance of thoſe ſeeming contraries, divine ſtrength with the weakneſs of a child. 1688.

CHAP. XI.

[UPON her coming out of St. *Mary's* ſhe retired into the community of Mad. *Miramion*, kept her bed of a fever three months, and had an impoſthume in her eye. Yet at this time ſhe was accuſed of going continually out, holding ſuſpected aſſemblies, together with other abominable and groundleſs falſhoods.—In this houſe her daughter was married to Monſ. L. *Nicholas Fouquet count de Vaux*; She removed to her daughters houſe, and on account of her extreme youth, lived with her two years and an half, and even there her enemies were ever forging one thing or other againſt her.—She then wanted to retire quite ſecretly, to the Benedictines at *Montargis*, (her native place) but

but it was diſcovered, and friends and enemies jointly prevented it.)

THE family in which my daughter was married being of the number of Abbe *Fenelon*'s friends, I had the opportunity of often ſeeing him at our houſe. We had ſome converſations on the ſubject of a ſpiritual life, in which he made ſeveral objections to my experiences therein. I anſwered them with my uſual ſimplicity, which gained upon him as I found. As the affair of *Molinos* at that time made a great noiſe, the plaineſt things were diſtruſted, and the terms uſed by myſtic writers exploded. But I ſo clearly expounded every thing to him, and ſo fully ſolved all his objections, that nobody became better convinced of my ſentiments than he; which has ſince laid the foundation of that perſecution he has ſuffered, as his anſwers to the biſhop of *Meaux* evidently ſhew to all that have read them without prejudice.

I NOW took a little private houſe, to follow the inclination I had for retirement; where I ſometimes had the pleaſure of ſeeing my family and a few particular friends. I often went to St. *Cyr*. Certain young Ladies of that houſe having informed Mad. *Maintenon*, that they found in my converſation ſomething which attracted them to GOD, ſhe encouraged me to continue my inſtructions to them; and by the fine change in ſome of them with whom before ſhe had not been well pleaſed, ſhe found ſhe had no reaſon to repent it. She then treated me with much reſpect; and for three years after, while this laſted, I received from her every mark of eſteem and confidence. But that very thing afterward drew on me the moſt ſevere perſecution. The free entrance I had into the houſe, and the confidence which ſome young ladies

ladies of the court, diſtingiſhed for their rank and piety, placed in me, gave no ſmall uneaſineſs to the people who had perſecuted me. The Directors took umbrage at it, and under pretext of the troubles I had had ſome years before, and of Quietiſm which they ſaid was making a great progreſs, they engaged the Biſhop of *Chartres*, Superior of St. *Cyr*, to preſent to Mad. *Maintenon* that, by my particular conduct, I troubled the order of the houſe; and that the young women in it were ſo attached to me, and to what I ſaid to them, that they no longer hearkened to their ſuperiors. I then went no more to St. *Cyr*. I anſwered the young ladies, who writ to me, no more but by letters unſealed, which paſſed through the hands of Mad. *Maintenon*.

Soon after I fell ſick. The phyſicians, after trying in vain the uſual method of cure, ordered me to repair to the waters of *Bourbon*. My lackey had been got to give me ſome poiſon. After taking it, I ſuffered ſuch exquiſite pains that, without ſpeedy ſuccour, I ſhould have died in a few hours. The lackey immediately ran away, and I have never ſeen him ſince. When I was at *Bourbon*, the waters which I threw up burned like ſpirits of wine. I had no thought of being poiſoned, till the phyſicians of *Bourbon* on throwing the ſaid water into the fire, aſſured me of it. The waters had but little effect. I ſuffered for above ſeven years after it. Since that time three or four attempts have been made to poiſon me: But God has preſerved me from it, through his mercy, and the preſentiments which he gave me of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

[This Chapter contains moſtly a continuation of the general decry, and perſecution that was raiſed againſt her, notwithſtanding the very private and retired life which ſhe led. All being inſufficient to ſcreen her from calumnies and perſecutions, and ſpeaks as follows of her ſtate.]

—God kept me at that time in ſuch a diſpoſition of ſacrifice, that I was quite reſigned to ſuffer every thing, and to receive from his hand all that might befall me, ſince for me to offer any way to vindicate myſelf would be only vindicating the air. When the Lord is willing to make any one ſuffer, he permits even the moſt virtuous people to be readily blinded toward them; and I may confeſs that the perſecution of the wicked is but little, when compared with that of the ſervants of God, deceived and animated with a zeal which they think right. Many of theſe were now, by the artifices made uſe of, greatly impoſed on in regard to me. I was repreſented to them in an odious light, as a ſtrange creature. Since then, I muſt, oh my Lord, be conformable to thee, to pleaſe thee; I ſet more value on my humiliation, and on ſeeing myſelf condemned of every body, than if I ſaw myſelf on the ſummit of honour in the world. How often have I ſaid, even in the bitterneſs of my heart, that I ſhould be more afraid of one reproach of my conſcience, than of the outcry and condemnation of all men!

CHAP. XIII.

[Her firſt acquaintance with the Biſhop of *Meaux*, to whom ſhe is introduced by her intimate friend the

the Duke of *Chevreuſe*. She gives him the foregoing Hiſtory of her Life, and he confeſſes: "that "he had found therein ſuch an unction as he had "rarely done in other books, and that he had "ſpent three days in reading it, with an impreſ-"ſion of the preſence of GOD on his mind all that "time."

[She propoſes to the Biſhop to examine all her writings, which he takes four or five months to do, and then advances all his objections; to which ſhe gives anſwers, but from his unacquaintance with the interior paths, ſhe cannot clear up all the difficulties which he finds in them.]

CHAP XIV.

[The beginning of this Chapter contains only a continuation of the objections, which the Biſhop pretended to find with her writings, and goes on thus:]

BY looking into the Eccleſiaſtical hiſtories for ages paſt, we may ſee that GOD hath ſometimes made uſe of laymen, and of women, to inſtruct, edify, and help ſouls in their progreſs to perfection: And I think one of the reaſons of GOD's acting thus, is that glory may not be aſcribed to any, but to himſelf alone. For this purpoſe, *he has choſen the weak things of this world, to confound ſuch as are mighty*. Cor. i. 27.

JEALOUS of the attributes which men pay to other men, which are only due to himſelf, he has made a paradox of ſuch perſons, that he alone may have the glory of his own works. I pray GOD with my whole heart ſooner to cruſh me utterly, with the moſt dreadful deſtruction, than to ſuffer

ſuffer me to take the leaſt honour to myſelf, of any thing which he has been pleaſed to do by me for the good of others. I am only a poor NOTHING. GOD is all powerful. He delights to operate, and exerciſe his power by mere NOTHINGS.

THE firſt time that I wrote a hiſtory of myſelf it was very ſhort. In it I had particularized my faults and ſins, and ſaid little of the favours of GOD. I was ordered to burn it to write another, and in it to omit nothing, any way remarkable that had befallen me. I did it. It is a crime to publiſh the ſecrets of the King; but it is a good thing to declare the favours of the Lord our GOD, and to magnify his mercies the more by the meanneſs of the ſubject on which he confers them. If herein I have failed, the fire will try and purify it all. When I firſt gave myſelf to the Lord it was without any reſerve: And for every thing of mine, which I only did out of obedience, I am content with whatever may be permitted, or ordained, as beſt in the caſe. It is my conſolation that GOD is not leſs great, perfect or happy, for any miſtakes or errors of mine. My ſoul can do nothing elſe but love him, and repoſe itſelf in his love. It ſeems that what proceeds from me flows from that ſource: And ſince *as many as are led by the Spirit of* GOD *are the children of* GOD, an humble hope attends me that I appertain to his family.

CHAP. XV.

[The general outcry encreaſes. Mad. *Maintenon* is gained over, and becomes prejudiced againſt her. She writes to her by the Duke of *Beauvilliers*, and requeſts an appointment of perſons to examine into her Life and Doctrine, offering

to

to retire into any priſon, till fully exculpated.—But her propoſal is rejected.—Monſ. *Fouquet*, one of her moſt intimate friends and relations dies; he had been her ſteady and conſtant ſupport. She feels the loſs, but rejoices in his felicity, for he had been a true ſervant of GOD.]

BEING now determined to retire out of the way of giving offence to any, I wrote to ſome of my friends, and bade them a laſt farewel; not knowing whether I were to be carried off by the indiſpoſition which I then laboured under, which had been a conſtant fever for forty days paſt, or to recover from it. I wrote further, "That I "prayed GOD to finiſh in them the good work he "had begun, that, if I had contributed any "good to them by his grace, he would not be "unmindful to preſerve in them that which was "his own, viz. the renunciation of themſelves, "to bear the croſs, to follow JESUS CHRIST "with hearts filled with his pure love; that they "might judge it was for them, and not for my-"ſelf, that I deprived myſelf of all commerce "with them, by whom I had often been much "edified; but now, if I ſtayed, I might hurt "them without deſigning it, and be an occaſion "of trouble and ſcandal to them; that I there-"fore deſired them to look upon me as a thing "forgotten,"

[SHE writ them a long letter; mentioning in it her particular enemies, one of whom is the Curate of *Verſailles*, who had formerly profeſſed a high eſteem for her, viſited her often, declared his ſentiments were the ſame with hers; but of late he had imagined, that ſhe had drawn away the Counteſs of G. and the Dutcheſs of M. from under his direction. Hereupon ſhe writes, "When "theſe

"theſe ladies and others were in the vani-"ties of the world, when they patched and "painted, and ſome of them were in the way to "ruin their families by gaming, and profuſion "of expence in dreſs, nobody aroſe to ſay any "thing againſt it, they were quietly ſuffered to do "it. When they have broke off from all this, "then they cry out againſt me, as if I had ruined "them. Had I drawn them from piety into "luxury, they would not make ſuch an outcry. "The Dutcheſs of M. at her giving herſelf up to "GOD, thought herſelf obliged to quit the Court, "which was to her like a dangerous rock, in or-"der to beſtow her time on the education of her "childern and the care of her family, which till "then ſhe had neglected. I beſeech you there-"fore to gather all the memorials you can againſt "me: And if I am found guilty of the things "they accuſe me of, I ought to be puniſhed "more than any other, ſince GOD has brought "me to know him and love him, and I am well "aſſured that there is no communion betwixt "CHRIST and BELIAL."

I SENT them at the ſame time my two little printed books, with my commentaries on the Holy Scriptures. I alſo, by their order, ſet about a work to facilitate their examination, and to ſpare them as much time and trouble as I could, which was to collect a great number of paſſages out of approved myſtic writers, which ſhewed the conformity of my writings with thoſe uſed by the holy penmen. It was a large work. I cauſed them to be tranſcribed by the quire, as I had writ them, in order to ſend them to the three commiſſioners. I alſo, as occaſion preſented, cleared up the dubious and obſcure places; for, as I had writ them at a time when the affairs of *Molinos* had

not

not broke out, I uſed the leſs precaution in expreſſing my thoughts, not imagining that they would ever be turned into an evil ſenſe. This work was entitled *the Juſtifications*; it was compoſed in fifty days, and appeared to be very ſufficient to clear up the matter. But the Biſhop of *Meaux* would never ſuffer it to be read*.

CHAP. XVIII.

AFTER all the examinations, and making nothing out againſt me, who would not have thought but they would have left me to reſt in peace? But quite otherwiſe, the more my innocence appeared, the more did they, who had undertaken to render me criminal, put every ſpring in motion to effect it. I offered the Biſhop of *Meaux* to go to ſpend ſome time in any community within his dioceſe, that he might be better acquainted with me. He propoſed to me that of St. *Mary de Meaux*, which I accepted, but in going thither in the depth of winter I had like to have periſhed in the ſnow, being ſtopt four hours, the coach having entered into it, and being almoſt buried in it, in a deep hollow. I was drawn out at the coach door with one maid. We ſat upon the ſnow, reſigned to the mercy of GOD, and expecting nothing but death. I never had more tranquillity of mind, though chilled and ſoaked with the ſnow, which melted on us. Occaſions like theſe are ſuch as ſhew whether we are perfectly reſigned to GOD or not. This poor girl and I were eaſy in our minds, in a ſtate of entire reſignation, though ſure of dying if we paſſed the night there, and ſeeing no likelihood of any coming to our ſuccour. At length ſome waggoners came up, who with difficulty drew us through the ſnow.

* It has ſince been printed in three vols. ſmall 8vo.

THE Biſhop, when he heard of it, was aſtoniſhed, and had no little ſelf-complacency to think that I had thus riſqued my life to obey him ſo punctually: And yet afterwards he gave all this the names of *artifice* and *hypocriſy*. Thus men who look at the tree, with an *evil* eye, account its fruits to be all *evil*. It is a ſtrange hypocriſy which endures through one's whole life, and which far from bringing with it any advantage in this world, cauſes only croſſes, calumnies, poverty, perſecutions and every kind of afflictions. I think one never has ſeen any hypocriſy like this. There are only two objects which hypocrites have in view; *either to win the eſteem of men or to make a fortune*. I am certainly a bad hypocrite, and have learned the trade badly. I take GOD to witneſs, that if to be Empreſs of the whole earth, and canonized while living, I muſt have gone through what I have done, (which was with the ſingle view of being devoted to GOD without any reſerve,) I would rather have begged my bread, and died as a criminal. Thus I render teſtimony for myſelf in the preſence of GOD. "That I have not "deſired to pleaſe any but him alone; that I have "ſought him only for himſelf; and that I dread "every ſelfiſh intereſt of my own worſe than "death; that ſo long a ſeries of perſecutions, "which in all likelihood will laſt as long as my "life, has never made me change ſentiment, "nor repent of having given myſelf wholly to "him, and of having left all for him."

THERE were times indeed when I found nature overcharged: But the love of GOD and his grace

rendered ſweet to me the very worſt of bitters. His inviſible hand ſupported me. Elſe I had ſunk under ſo many probations. Sometimes I ſaid to myſelf, *All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.* Pſal. xlii. 7. *Thou haſt bent thy bow and ſet me as a mark for the arrow, Thou haſt cauſed all the arrows of thy quiver to enter into my reins.* Lam. iii. 12. 13. It ſeemed to me as if every one thought he was in the right to treat me ill, and rendered ſervice to GOD in doing it. I then comprehended that it was the very manner in which JESUS CHRIST ſuffered. *He was numbered with the tranſgreſſors.* Mark xv. 28. He was condemned by the ſovereign pontiff, chief prieſts, doctors of the law, and judges deputed by the Romans, who valued themſelves on doing juſtice. Happy they who by ſuffering for the will of GOD under all the like circumſtances, have ſo near a relation to the ſufferings of JESUS CHRIST!

For ſix weeks after my arrival at *Meaux*, I was in a continual fever, nor had I recovered from my indiſpoſition, when I was waited on by the Biſhop, who would fain have compelled me to give it under my hand, that I did not believe the Word Incarnate, (or CHRIST manifeſt in the fleſh.) I anſwered him, "that thro' the grace of GOD, I "knew how to ſuffer, even to death, but not how "to ſign ſuch falſehoods." Several of the Nuns who overheard this converſation, and perceiving the ſentiments of the Biſhop, they joined with the Prioreſs, in giving a teſtimonial, not only of my good conduct, but of their belief in the ſoundneſs of my faith.

CHAP. XIX.

[The Biſhop of *Meaux*, in ſome days after, brings her a confeſſion of faith, and a ſubmiſſion of

of her books to the church, that ſhe may ſign it, promiſing to give her a certificate, which he had prepared; but on her delivering him her ſubmiſſion ſigned, he, notwithſtanding his promiſe, refuſed to give the certificate. In ſome time after, he endeavoured to make her ſign his paſtoral letter, and acknowledge ſhe had fallen into thoſe errors, which he there lays to her charge, and made many demands of her of the like abſurd and unreaſonable nature, threatening her with thoſe perſecutions ſhe afterwards endured in caſe of noncompliance. However ſhe continued reſolute, in refuſing to put her name to falſehoods. At length, after ſhe had remained about ſix months at *Meaux*, he gave her the certificate: but finding Mad. *Maintenon* diſapproved of the certificate he had granted, he wanted to give her another in lieu of it. Her refuſal to deliver up the firſt certificate enraged the Biſhop, and as ſhe underſtood they intended to puſh matters with the utmoſt violence, ſhe ſays, "I thought, tho' I were reſigned to "whatever might fall out, yet I ought to take "prudent meaſures to avoid the threatening "ſtorm." Many places of retreat were offered me; but I was not free in my mind to accept of any, not to embaraſs any body, nor involve in trouble my friends and my family, to whom they might attribute my eſcape. I took the reſolution of continuing in *Paris*, of living there in ſome private place with my maids, who were truſty and ſure, and in general to hide myſelf from the view of the world. I continued thus for above five or ſix months. I paſſed the day all alone in reading, in praying to GOD, and in working. But the 27th of December 1695, I was arreſted, tho' exceedingly indiſpoſed at that time, and conducted to *Vincennes*. I was three days in the

cuſtody of Monſ. *des Grez*, who had arreſted me; becauſe the King would not conſent to my being put into priſon; ſaying ſeveral times over, *that a Convent was ſufficient*. They deceived his juſtice by ſtill ſtronger calumnies. They painted me in his eyes in colours ſo black, that they made him ſcruple his goodneſs and equity. He then conſented to my being taken to *Vincennes*.

CHAP. XX.

I SHALL not ſpeak of that long perſecution, which has made ſo much noiſe, for a ſeries of ten years impriſonments, in all ſorts of priſons, and of a baniſhment almoſt as long, and not yet ended, through croſſes, calumnies and all imaginable ſorts of ſufferings. There are facts too odious on the parts of divers perſons, which charity induces me to cover: And it is in this ſenſe that *charity covers a multitude of ſins*. 1 PET. iv. 8. And there are others on the part of thoſe who, having been ſeduced by ill-diſpoſed perſons, are yet reſpected by me for their piety and other reaſons, though they have ſhewed a zeal too bitter for things of which they had no true knowledge. The one ſort I paſs over in ſilence out of reſpect, and the other out of charity. What I have to ſay is, that from ſo long a train of croſſes, with which my life has been filled, one may judge that the greateſt were reſerved till the laſt; and that GOD who, through an effect of his goodneſs, did not reject me, had no mind to leave the end of my life without a greater conformity to JESUS CHRIST. He was arraigned before all ſorts of tribunals. He has done me the favour to be ſo too. He ſuffered the moſt violent outrages without complaining. He has conferred on me the mercy of doing the ſame. How could I do otherwiſe

wiſe in the view he gave me of his love and his goodneſs? In this reſemblance of my Saviour I regarded as favours, what the world looks upon as ſtrange perſecutions. The peace and joy I had within hindered me from ſeeing the moſt violent perſecutors, otherwiſe than as inſtruments of the juſtice of my GOD, which has ever been to me ſo adorable and ſo amiable. I was then in priſon as in a place of delight and refreſhment, this general privation of all creatures giving me more room to be alone with GOD. Thus I regarded all thoſe great apparent evils, and that univerſal decry, as the greateſt of all benefits. I looked upon it as the work of the hand of GOD, who was pleaſed *to cover his tabernacle with the ſkins of beaſts*, to hide it from the eyes of thoſe to whom he would not have it manifeſted.

I HAVE born long and ſore languiſhings, oppreſſive and painful maladies without relief. I have been alſo inwardly under great deſolations for ſeveral months, in ſuch ſort that I could only ſay theſe words, "My GOD, My GOD, why haſt "thou forſaken me?" All creatures ſeemed to be againſt me. I then put myſelf on the ſide of GOD, and of the creatures, againſt myſelf. How could I complain of what I ſuffered, with a love ſo clear from all ſelf-intereſt? Should I now intereſt myſelf for myſelf, after having made ſo entire a ſacrifice of whatever regards this *ſelf*? No. I therefore chuſe rather to conſecrate all thoſe ſufferings by ſilence.

I HAVE defended my innocence with enough of courage and firmneſs, not to leave any doubt of the falſehood of the calumnies caſt on perſons whoſe prayer is fervent and love ſincere. The ſpeeches of their ſlanderers are raſh, and contrary to every ſort of truth and juſtice: And yet the heart,

which loves GOD, whoſe conſcience reproaches it with nothing, even from hence gains an increaſe of ſtrength and of happineſs. Perſecution is a weight which always ſinks and plunges the ſoul into GOD. What matters it if all creatures are unchained againſt that ſoul, when it is all alone in ſweet communion with its GOD, and gives him ſolid teſtimonies of its love? So, ſince there is no other way of teſtifying to GOD that we love him, than in bearing heavy ſufferings for his love, we are infinitely indebted to him when he gives us the means of doing it.

PERHAPS ſome will be ſurpriſed at my refuſing to give the detail of the greateſt and ſtrongeſt croſſes of my life, after I have related thoſe which were leſs. I thought it proper to tell ſomething of the croſſes of my youth, to ſhew the crucifying conduct which GOD held over me. I thought myſelf alſo obliged to relate certain facts, to manifeſt their falſehood, the conduct of thoſe by whom they had paſſed, and the authors of thoſe perſecutions of which I have been only the accidental object, as I was only perſecuted, in order to involve therein perſons of great merit; whom, being out of their reach by themſelves, they therefore could not perſonally attack, but by confounding their affairs with mine. I thought I owed it to religion, piety, my friends, my family and myſelf.

WHILE I was priſoner at *Vincennes*, and Monſieur *De La Reine* examined me, I paſſed my time in great peace, content to paſs the reſt of my life there, if ſuch were the will of GOD. I ſang ſongs of joy, which the maid who ſerved me learned by heart, as faſt as I made them: And we together ſang thy praiſes, oh my God! The ſtones of my priſon

priſon looked in my eyes like rubies. I eſteemed them more than all the gaudy brilliancies of a vain world. My heart was full of that joy which thou giveſt to them who love thee, in the midſt of their greateſt croſſes.

THIS peace was wounded, for a ſhort ſpace, by an infidelity which I fell into. It was in premeditating one day on what anſwers I ſhould make at an examination which was to be the next day. I anſwered badly. GOD, who had ſo often cauſed me to anſwer difficult and perplexed queſtions, with much facility and preſence of mind, puniſhed me now, even by ſtopping me ſhort on eaſy matters with confuſion. It ſerved to ſhew me the inutility of our arguments on ſuch occaſions, and the ſafety of truſting in GOD. They who depend on human reaſon ſay, "it is neceſſary to look "before us, and to make our preparations; that "it is to tempt GOD, and expect miracles to act "otherwiſe." I leave others to think what they will. As to me, I find no ſafety but in reſigning myſelf to GOD. All ſcripture abounds with texts enforcing ſuch a reſignation.

When things were carried to the greateſt extremities, being then in the *Baſtile*, I ſaid to thee, oh my GOD, "if thou art pleaſed to render me a "new *ſpectacle to men and angels*, thy holy will be "done! All I aſk is that thou wilt ſave thine, ſo "that neither *principalities, nor powers, nor the "ſword, may ever ſeparate them from the pure love "in* JESUS CHRIST. As for me, what matters "it what men think of me, or make me ſuffer, "ſince they cannot ſeparate me from thee? "Were I to pleaſe all men and diſpleaſe thee, "wretched would be the conſequence. Let all

"men then deſpiſe and hate me, ſo I may but "be agreeable to thee. Their ſtrokes will poliſh "what may be defective in me, that I may be "preſented to him for whom I die daily." I ſaw all men united as it were to ſurprize and to torment me, all the ſubtilty of wit employed for it, by people who had abundance of it; and poor me alone without ſuccour, ſometimes alſo feeling the heavy hand of GOD upon me, who ſeemed to abandon me to myſelf, and to my own obſcurity; all my own vivacity having been ſo long mortified, having laboured all my life long to ſubmit myſelf to JESUS CHRIST, and my reaſon to his conduct. I voluntarily underwent, as long as my health permitted it, very rigourous faſtings and auſtere penances: But all this looked only like the burning of ſtraw. One moment of the exerciſes of GOD is of a thouſand times more efficacy than all *that we can inflict* upon ourſelves.

[BEFORE I enter on her concluſive Chapter, it may be proper to exhibit a view of her poetry.

IN her long impriſonment, ſhe compoſed, as ſhe has informed us, many Hymns; with Poems on all ſorts of ſpiritual Subjects, filling five octavo volumes. Her poetic vein was free, flowing with warm devotion and gratitude. Specimens thereof have already been exhibited in ſeveral Tranſlations, but in a manner inadequate both to the ſubject and to her compoſitions.]

CANTIQUE

M. GUION's POEMS.

CANTIQUE I.

I.

GREAT GOD here at eaſe,
Thee ſingly to pleaſe.
I ſing all the length of the day;
Shut up in a cage,
Yet ſhelter'd from rage:
Oh liſten and ſmile on the lay!

II.

From ſorrow releas'd,
With ſolace increas'd,
The bars of my priſon I love:
All toil here untry'd,
All wants well ſupply'd,
I am bleſt and enrich'd from above.

III.

What if aliens are prone
To deſpiſe as unknown,
A language in heav'n underſtood;
'Tis a feaſt to the taſte
Of the ſoul that is chaſte,
As it flows from the fountain of good.

IV.

Tho' my foes have combin'd,
And my body confin'd,
Yet my ſoul is with liberty bleſt:
I am humbly content,
With whatever is ſent,
For I know that thy pleaſure is beſt.

V.

O pleaſure divine,
All excellence thine;
And thee will I love and adore:
The more piercing my pain
The more freedom I gain,
And of every choice bleſſing the more.

VI.

Accept then, I pray,
The tribute I pay.
I ſing, as a bird full of joy,
Vivacious, expos'd,
In a cage when incloſ'd,
His warbling effuſions employ.

VII.

Grant my hymns utter'd here,
Melodious to chear,
Tho' tend'rer and ſofter than fine:
And the ſtrength ever deign
Of my life to ſuſtain,
Of that durable life which is thine.

VIII.

Thy wondrous defence
Makes a cell ſeem immenſe,
It

It sheds so peculiar a grace
Such a pleasure abounds,
Such a glory surrounds,
And the joys of thy kingdom embrace.

IX.

All my foes I behold,
All the stout and the bold,
Perplexing their hearts with their pain;
Confounded.—I see,
While happily free,
How they vent all their furies in vain!

CANTIQUE II.

Addressed to her Dungeon.

I.

O Lov'd solitude,
Where happiness greets;
And nothing that's rude
Embitters her sweets;
Where all the long day
Is a banquet divine!
Can torments allay
Such affection as mine?

II.

No, welcome to love,
My pains are delights:
No torture can move,
No terror affrights.
Let 'em smite with a spear,
Or pierce with a dart,
The worst they can rear
The wish of my heart.

III.

Immur'd in a fort,
My sole exercise,
While without a support,
Is my love and my sighs:
For meekness in harms
My glory will prove;
And Sovereign Charms
Should have Sovereign love.

IV.

Let me faithful endure,
As my sufferings, I find,
The pleasure procure,
Which reigns in my mind
As GOD, from on high,
Changes what would annoy;
And deigns to supply
Strength, patience and joy.

CANTIQUE III.

I.

MY dearest Protector, see how they detain
My life in a dungeon; Yet let me remain
While such is thy pleasure: For better no doubt
In a *prison* with thee than a *palace* without!

II.

No thought in my heart dare, to lift up its head,
But the thought which to love and to serve thee is led.

III.

I wish'd to be thine from my tenderest age:
No lovers beside have I sought to engage,

No

No slender supports of the loftiest reeds,
No trust in their words, and no hope in their deeds.

IV.

In every probation to thee the recourse
Of my soul, in thy grace is its only resource.
What else can I do, so surrounded with foes,
But fly to thy goodness which heals all my woes?

V.

When my hair shall grow white, and infirmities shake
This old shatter'd fabrick thou wilt not forsake.

VI.

LOVE perfect and pure goes farther than thought:
None knows, till he proves it, how dear 'twill be bought.
Yet 'tis well worth its price, and a thousand times more,
Since it brings us to Heav'n when our labours are o'er.

THE four following pieces are extracted from many of her's promiscuously taken. The two first give a brief review of some of the former part of her life. The third, of the excellencies of divine love. The fourth, of her universal concern for mankind

I.

I.

PERMIT me, my GOD
For thy bounty bestow'd
To render oblations of praise;
O gracious to grant
The supplies of each want,
And to high resignation to raise!

II.

To blast with the wind
What malice design'd;
To fill with the fervour of love!
Its duteous flow,
I joyfully know,
The Lord of my life will approve.

III.

What slanders and lies
Ran around in disguise,
To make odious the sound of my name;
And, as far as they durst,
To procure me the worst,
Tho' guiltless of suffering and shame:

IV.

Till wave upon wave
Threaten'd death and a grave,
In the fathomless depth of the flood;
So resolv'd in their will!
They had meant it for ill;
But thy pleasure has turn'd it to good.

For

V.

For here, O my GOD,
What a grateful abode!
An aſylum of boundleſs
delight!
I rejoice in my ſtate,
Tho' my lodging ſo ſtrait,
Having nothing but thee
in my ſight.

VI.

Let the winds roar about;
Let the ſtorms rage *without*
All *within* is ſo calm and
ſerene!
Not a cumberſome care,
Not a trifling affair,
Interrupting the peace of
the ſcene!

VII.

If events then ariſe,
Or deſcend from the ſkies,
On thee let me ſingly de-
pend.
From the wind and the wave
Thou art *mighty to ſave*,
And a calm, and a ſun-
ſhine to ſend.

VIII.

Human wiſdom and pride,
Fling your glories aſide,
Nor ſeduce with your
ſparks in the night.
Ye ſo ſlily deceive,
That men fancy they're
brave,
And refuſe to their Au-
thor his right,

IX.

Ye provoke with your
flames
Into furious aims,
Till wrath in confuſion
expires.
While favour'd with light,
Which wou'd lead them a-
right,
How they claſh in their
erring deſires!

X.

O ye carnally wiſe,
Who deride and deſpiſe
All your ſenſe what im-
menſely tranſcends!
What in ſecret is ſeal'd,
Yet to babes is reveal'd,
No critical wit compre-
hends.

XI.

In time then apply,
This wiſdom to buy;
Your Wills to your Au-
thor's reſign.
Be humble and juſt,
Upright in each truſt,
And in mercy and purity
ſhine.

XII.

Then ineffable gains
Will reſult from your pains,
And, the gates of his
kingdom unbarr'd,
The celeſtial King,
In his bounty, will bring
To the joys of an endleſs
reward.

II.

I

O LOVE ever true,
Ever ancient and new
How thy favours un-
bounded amaze!
How grace from on high,
Like an angel of joy,
All around me thy glory
diſplays!

'Tis

II

'Tis the ceaſeleſs delight
Of my ſoul to recite
The ſhow'rs of thy love
as they flow.
My ALL is in thee;
And NOTHING to me
Are the charms of the na-
tions below

III.

Thy preſence inſpires,
And crowns my deſires.
Oh fill all my ſoul with
thy love!
My Guardian and Guide
When tempted and try'd!
Let our union eternally
move.

IV.

To my ſoul, to my ſight,
All is ſweet, all is bright:
For thy pleaſure all na-
ture obeys.
Here I trace all thy truth,
From my tendereſt youth,
Thro' the ſcenes of my ear-
lieſt days.

V.

My forces had fail'd,
By ſickneſs aſſail'd,
Yet health from thy hand
I regain'd.
When weigh'd to the ground
With croſſes around,
Thy hand, ſtill attentive ſuſ-
tain'd.

VI.

The tempeſt and tide
With perils have ply'd,
Amid the loud threats of
the ſeas;
The heights over floods,
The robbers in woods;
Yet my heart was un-
mov'd and at eaſe.

VII

When of fiends and of foes
Rude legions aroſe,
To ſhock me with direful
diſmay;
Full of faith, void of fear,
I repell'd their career,
Thro' the force of thy
ſovereign ſway.

VIII.

What can anger or pride?
Having thee on my ſide,
Their efforts abortive re-
bound.
The plots and the ſchemes
Wild phantoms and dreams!
The hearts of their au-
thors they wound.

IX.

How in envy combin'd,
In their errors how blind,
With the tendereſt com-
paſſion I view.
Their labour employ'd,
In thy favour enjoy'd,
My warmeſt of wiſhes
purſue.

III.

On the EXCELLENCIES of DIVINE LOVE.

WHEN Affection abounds that is perfect and pure,
No terrors alarm, and no vices allure.
The ſoul, then exalted, all goodneſs purſues;
For honours immortal engroſs all her views.

The

Then holding her freedom, her purity bought,
Th' Infernals are vex'd at their victim uncaught.
What ſtrains can this perfect affection declare?
What objects aſſemble with it to compare?
'Tis the richeſt of treaſures, the brighteſt of gems;
All thrones it outſhines, all the world's diadems.
'Tis the nobleſt of plants, as aſcending it ſhoots
From the true pious heart, full of excellent fruits.
From the ſmalleſt of ſeeds it will riſe and will ſpread
O'er the Earth with its boughs, up to Heav'n with its head.
The ſtorm only touches its rind as it blows;
For the more it is puſh'd at the firmer it grows.
So ſolid and laſting its virtues are ſeen,
Its fruits ever fine, and its leaves ever green;
In all ages and climates admir'd and renown'd,
From the love of the Higheſt they ſolely redound.
'Tis the firſt and the fineſt of themes ever known,
All beſide it, give way—to behold it alone!
On every condition it breathes a content,
With the bleſs'd recollection of moments well ſpent.
It ſweetens our bitters, it comforts our toil;
It melts down the mountains, and ſoftens the ſoil.
It lifts up the vales as it levels the hills,
Throws *loftineſs* down, and with *lowlineſs* fills.
Each image of gold, and each idol of lead,
As they fall to the ground, *loſe the hands and the head.*
It ſtrengthens in weakneſs, in ſickneſs it heals,
And pleaſures, rewarding, to ſorrows unſeals.
It brightens in trials, as gold, when refin'd,
The droſs in the furnace when leaving behind.
It baffles all Malice, and balks her intent,
Full happines flowing where miſery was meant!
The Priſ'ner, exulting, the wonder proclaims;
And Martyrs, with ſongs, in the midſt of the flames.
To kindneſs approaching it opens a door,
Supplying all wants, and enriching the poor:
The glory of countries, the beauty of towns!
From croſſes quite trans'ent, to permanent crowns,
The coward turns fearleſs of ſwords and of ſeas;
And mortals, aſtoniſh'd, works wonders with eaſe.
Effects of thy goodneſs, O SOV'REIGN DIVINE!
All the powers in the world are as nothing to thine.
Each riſing deſire in the *heart* is deny'd,
Which tends from thy kingdom to turn *it* aſide.

The

The ready ſuppreſſion attracts thy regards:
And ſweet are the foretaſtes of future rewards;
The *hundred-fold* promis'd to them who reſign
All the charms they delight in, and chuſe to be thine.
Ambition and Av'rice and Envy and Luſt,
An army of Giants, are ſtretch'd in the duſt.
The mighty GOLIAH's, who vaunt on the plain,
By the hands of thy ſtriplings are ſpeedily ſlain.
Proud SELF is *in aſhes abas'd, and abhorr'd,*
And only the Maker of all things ador'd.
To thee then adhering, wherever they go,
With how virtuous ardor thy votaries glow?
Tho' rocks in the road, or tho' deſarts are found,
Harmonious appears the creation around.
All nature looks chearful, if foul or if fair,
New fragrance diffuſing throughout the mild air.
The joy that's *within* iſſues forth in their views,
And paradiſe, gracing all objects, renews.
Shou'd we buy it with ſuffering, and loſſes of all
The flocks in the field, and the herds in the ſtall,
With vollies of ſlander our characters torn,
Or fierce perſecutions inceſſantly born,
The purchaſe were cheap, ſince alone it procures
A fitneſs for bliſs which for ever endures.

IV.

I.

O my Sov'reign engage
Every nation and age
To lay hold of thy profers of aid;
The motions of ſin
To ſtifle within,
In virtues unſpotted array'd!

II.

Happy change of the times,
Over ages and climes,
While o'er 'em thy ſun daily ſhines:
From each crime, and each luſt,
Ever pure, ever juſt,
And ennobled in all their deſigns!

III.

The fault is not thine,
If the ſinner decline
To walk in the way that is right;
So clear thou haſt ſhew'd,
So courted and woo'd
His return to the rays of thy light!

IV.

But it grieves to ſurvey
Such a fatal decay
Of the life of true heavenly birth

How

How its beauties are foil'd,
And its fortitude foil'd,
Wide over the face of the earth!

V.

Ah the treacherous joys
Of periſhing toys;
Of treaſures a baneful abuſe;
Like ſnakes hid in flow'rs,
Or harlots amours
Which deadly diſtempers adduce!

VI.

They plunge into woes,
Which admit no repoſe,
Where inſolent ſpirits infeſt:
Their mirth and their wit,
And their ſcorning, unfit
To join in the joys of the bleſt!

VII.

Who vices refuſe,
And rectitude chuſe,
Can never repent of their choice.
True freedom, alone,
True bliſs is their own,
Who hearken and follow thy voice.

VIII.

Tho' ſo high on thy throne,
'Tis thy joy to make known
Thy ſecrets unſeal'd, to the wiſe.
In affection divine,
As in action, they ſhine,
And thy mercies they thankfully prize.

IX.

Thy word to fulfill.
To conform to thy will,
The permanent mark of the mind!
With thee they converſe,
And rejoice to rehearſe
Thy laws, and thy love to mankind.

X.

When theſe meet on high,
In a lovelier ſky,
Where their Sov'reign and Saviour appears;
All beauties are found,
All pleaſures abound,
And his infinite goodneſs endears.

XI.

Their labours all o'er,
Their troubles no more,
Triumphing in luſtre improv'd,
What joys will they know,
From the fountain to flow,
Ever loving, and ever belov'd!

XII.

Who can ceaſe to admire,
O Sov'reign and Sire,
How thy Greatneſs and Goodneſs unite?
Then, depirv'd of his crown
Buſy SELF is thrown down,
When we come to behold things aright.

M. GUION's

M. GUION's Experience of DIVINE COMMUNION, A POEM.

Propheſying that the Light of the Goſpel ſhould reach to, and ſpread in diſtant Countries, ſeparate Iſlands, and other Hemiſpheres *.

CHRIST to his SPOUSE.

O Thou dear object of my fixt delight,
True to my laws, and beauteous in my ſight,
Obſequious, chaſte, effervent with the dart
Of pure affection in thy conſtant heart!
My BRIDE elected! All THY SELF reſign:
For ever faithful to thy bridegroom ſhine,
As when thy toils, in prior days purſu'd,
No ſtipend ſought, no ſordid wiſh allow'd.
When in the maze of thorny paths I led,
Or on the cliffs where briary thickets bred,
Thy courſe was dauntleſs, while it ſeem'd alone,
And faith undevious from the path unknown.
Pleas'd I beheld thy vigilance and fears,
Reliev'd thy ſighs, allay'd thy guſhing tears,
Look'd on thy conflicts, heard thy ſuppliant ſtrain,
And arm'd with patience in the depth of pain.
When death ſtood threat'ning, ſtill my SPOUSE reſign'd
Call'd not my love inconſtant or unkind.
Thy loads were pond'rous: I the burthen bleſt,
Tho' fancied diſtant from thy ſoul diſtreſt.
No placid eaſe, or gay diverſion ſought,
None but the ſuccours which my pleaſure brought,
With lenient balm I ſooth'd each pain and fright,
Within thy boſom, yet without thy ſight.
This then thy language, "O my deareſt SPOUSE,
" With thee to ſuffer is the lot I chuſe.
" For thee to labour is thy lover's ſcope:
" Thy ſmile her only happineſs and hope!
" All gems beſide it are but void and vain:
" They wound her peace, and tantalize her pain.
" One look of thine (why turn'd away thoſe eyes?)
" Fills with new raptures, and new life ſupplies."
I ſaw thee ſtruggling with incumbent throes,
As to my throne thy pray'r, emergent, roſe.

* Perhaps the Britiſh Iſles, which have been highly favoured, alſo America, and even Greenland, where the Goſpel has been faithfully propagated, by ſome PATIENT LABOURERS from Germany.

No pow'r exterior gave internal reſt,
Or gain'd a ſeat and ſceptre in thy *Breaſt*.
It ſoftly breath'd, O Witneſs of my love,
" Look down auſpicious, from the realms above.
" O rock of ages! Nothing here below
" I crave, enrich'd if thy compaſſion flow.
When yet *too weak* I ſaw thy willing mind
For full refinement, which my grace deſign'd,
I call'd, " Exert thy double fortitude,
" No baits, delicious to the ſenſes, view'd.
" For ſuch our league: If thou'lt be wholly mine,
" Thou muſt all darlings, and thyſelf, reſign,
" Caſt each warm wiſh of *all thy bliſs* aſide,
" And reſt *in mine* completely ſatisfi'd.
" Endure with patience. Let no conflicts tire;
" *To ſee me glorious* be thy ſole deſire."
What in ſuch conſcious ſolitude I ſaid
Thine ear attended, and thy heart obey'd.
My chearing voice thy vividhope advanc'd,
And the chaſte ardour of thy love enhanc'd.
Unſeen, unknown, thou woud'ſt have inſtant dy'd,
To give bright pledges of a faithful Bride.
All beauty's charms in dark oblivion caught,
All ſelfiſh intereſts in the duſt unſought,
Thou cry'd, " I'm fair if faithful to my Lord,
" Whoſe wond'rous favours on his Spouſe are ſtor'd."
At length all murmurs on thy lips decay'd:
All fell in ſilent reſignation laid.
Silence profound! It's marv'lous glow refines,
And human wit, and wiſdom, far outſhines.
All words are worthleſs, where its beams abound,
When mutual converſe melts without a ſound.
Thus in the woods thou paſt thy pleaſing youth,
Alone enraptur'd with *celeſtial truth*,
In reverend ſtillneſs heard *my language* there,
And wiſh'd no human eloquence to hear.
It wrought its wonders. And thy pangs it heal'd,
And joyous myſt'ries of my realm reveal'd
Unveil'd my beauty; with my goodneſs bleſt;
Source of thy toils, and temple of thy reſt!
'Twas then thy ſoul in cleareſt luſtre ſaw,
How ſenſes, pamper'd, into bondage draw.
Thy hands refus'd, whate'er would gratify,
Their keen demand, ſuperfluous, to ſupply.

All

All charms then darken'd which had once been bright,
As ſtars all vaniſh from the ſolar light.
Each wiſh was ONE, as when the lucid rays,
To one fix'd point collected, hotly blaze.
Then in new freedom ſoar'd thy flaming love,
High on the pinions of the peaceful dove;
Of theſe great favours all the grateful fame,
To diſtant nations, ardent to proclaim.

Her SOLILOQUY and ADDRESS.

SUCH ſalutation, from my Sov'reign Spouſe,
Hail'd in his Bride a boundleſs love to rouſe,
Of ſecret Self to drown the ſly controul,
And fix in perfect purity of ſoul.
No more I wiſh'd of tranſient toys to view,
No more mine audience vain diſcourſes drew.
" Oh grant new pow'rs, *I pray'd*, my Love ſupreme,
" For promulgation of the worthieſt theme:
" Nor longer leave my fervor thus confin'd,
" Since thy refulgence on my ſoul has ſhin'd!
" Thy boundleſs goodneſs now my ſoul ſurveys,
" 'Tis loſt in wonder, and 'tis fill'd with praiſe.
" Rapt with thy beauties, and exempt from fear,
" I muſt reſound 'em, tho' the worſt I bear.
Ye ſever'd iſles, and *Hyperborean* plains
Whoſe floods lie fetter'd in their icy chains,
Whoſe piercing blaſts deprive your dreary glades
Of the ſweet fragrance of the Southern ſhades,
To you, tho' diſtant, in his name I call;
Oh live devoted to the LORD of All.
Your gates immortal to his Grace unfold;
And ye'll exult in bleſſings yet untold,
In the high glories of perpetual hills,
In the ſweet ſolace of celeſtial rills.
If no repugnance intercept the rays
Which riſe to bleſs you with the beſt of days,
All wants redreſs'd, a brighter ſun will glow,
And endleſs love in bliſsful union flow,
Your heart and hands in generous acts employ,
And crown your labour with tranſcendent joy.
Ye ſtately fabricks in th' enamel'd fields,
Where *art* improves what lovely *nature* yields;
Ye beauteous hills for pearly fruits renown'd,
Ye crowns of vines which deck their ſummits round,

Ye wide canals which coſt amazing toil,
Ye ſtreams which murmur o'er the flow'ry ſoil,
Oh ſince your Lords, decoy'd with earthly views,
Neglect the Giver, and the gifts miſuſe,
Since peace fraternal yields to ſelfiſh ſtrife,
And graceful virtue to luxurious life,
I leave, lamenting, your infected ſtate,
And waft my words to regions leſs elate.
Ye then who hold yon *Weſtern* Hemiſphere,
Or whoſe long darkneſs ends your frigid year,
Within your breaſts your Author's love incloſe,
To thaw your ice, and melt your chilling ſnows.
He courts a refuge in your nations. Chuſe
Him for your LORD, nor offer'd bliſs refuſe.
His due reception renders every place
Fair in his ſight and honour'd with his Grace.
He lifts aloft, and wings to bliſs from woe
A race of rebels in the world below,
Broke from the bonds of daſtard fear and ſhame,
By virtue fervent with celeſtial flame.
Ye fruitleſs tracts, whoſe hapleſs towns are thin,
Oh, if he ſhield you from the ſhafts of ſin;
His perfect goodneſs if your tribes revere,
And to his laws, in ſpotleſs lives adhere;
Then all its wildneſs will the waſte forego,
Then cluſtering grapes for noxious brambles grow.
But righteous judgment will at laſt ſurprize,
If mortals, call'd, the gracious call deſpiſe.

SOME Short Pieces taken from her Book of Emblems, which appear to have been the Productions of her younger days.

I

HOW endanger'd was I, when diſtant from thee,
When ſins had an abſolute reign;
When frantic with joy, from reſtriction if free,
I ruſh'd into ſports with the vain!

II.

When idle amuſements attracted my heart,
When I heard, and yet, fled from thy voice;
Applauding my *folly* for flying apart,
And blindly purſuing her choice!

III.

I now ſee it all with a pungent regret;
Of my raſhneſs I deeply repent.
Oh deign, I beſeech, to forgive and forget.
To thy will let me fully be bent!

I.

HOW long I reſiſted a gracious GOD,
Who kindly vouchſaf'd to invite!
Ah rebel I was, well deſerving his rod,
And to ſink in the horrors of night.

II.

I ſubmit, I ſurrender myſelf to thy will:
And nothing I hope from my tears.
Thy righteous ſentence let juſtice fulfil;
So my ſoul be ſet free from her fears.

III.

Great Author of goodneſs, my heart with thy love
Has been ſmitten, and felt its delight:
Then every delay from obedience remove,
And turn what is wrong all aright.

I.

NO pains I deplore,
Which are paid to my fault;
Chaſtiſe me yet more,
To revenge the revolt.

II.

I'm aſham'd and I grieve,
As thy goodneſs I find
So ſwift to relieve,
To careſs me ſo kind.

III.

Not thy *mercies* alone,
But thy *juſtice* I crave,
What beſt will attone
My relapſe, to receive:

IV.

Of ſuch a tranſgreſſion
How painful the ſenſe!
Will the loudeſt confeſſion
Efface its offence?

V.

Will my ſhameful condition
Be heal'd with regret?
Will floods of contrition
E'er cancel the debt?

VI.

Oh unjuſt and ingrate!
Let thy hand be ſevere
Let me ſuffer its weight,
'Till I'm fix'd in thy fear,

VII.

Redouble my pain
So my ſins be but loſt;
I will count it all gain,
And not care what it coſt.

I.

O Draw me, my Spouſe, and thy ſteps I'll purſue;
For around thee how every thing blooms!
How ſweet is all nature, how beauteous to view!
How reviving with od'rous perfumes!

II.

Here the Spouſe ſtopt me ſhort, as a novice in love;
In ſuch terms, in his turn, he reply'd;
"Weak lovers cry out for attractions to move:
And are falſe and inconſtant when try'd.

III.

There's a ſhorter, yet worthier, path to be trod,
A path of the love which is pure:
Where troubles, or tortures, the lover of GOD
Is willing for him to endure:

IV.

No road ſtrew'd with roſes expecting to find,
But a life of reſemblance to mine.
I ſuffer'd for ſinners, to death was reſign'd,
And agonies link'd in a line.

V.

The ſelf-pleaſing path be no longer ſurvey'd,
Nor cheriſh a hope to rejoice:
By tracing me here let thy love be diſplay'd
And then thou wilt merit my choice."

CHAP. XXI. and laſt.

AS my life has ever been conſecrated to the croſs, I was no ſooner out of priſon, and my ſpirit began to breathe a little, after ſo many perſecutions, but my body was afflicted with all ſorts of infirmities. I have had almoſt continual maladies, which often brought me to the very verge of death.

IN theſe laſt times I can hardly ſpeak at all of my diſpoſitions. For my ſtate is become quite ſimple and without any variations. It is a profound *annihilation*. I find nothing in myſelf to which I can give a name. All that I know is that GOD is infinitely holy, righteous, good and happy. I ſee nothing below myſelf, nothing more unworthy of his bounties than I am. I acknowledge that GOD has heaped favours on me, enough to ſave a world, which I have requited too much with ingratitude. All good is in HIM; I am a meer *Nothing*. To me every condition ſeems equal. All is loſt in his immenſity, like a little

little drop of water in the ſea. In this divine immenſity the ſoul ſees itſelf no more, but it diſcerns every object in GOD, without diſcerning them otherwiſe than by the feeling of the heart. All is darkneſs in regard to itſelf, all is light on the ſide of GOD, who lets me be ignorant of nothing that is proper, or of real advantage. There is here neither clamour, nor ſorrow, nor pain, nor vain pleaſure, nor uncertainty; but a perfect peace; not in ſelf, but in GOD: No intereſt for ſelf, no anxiety recollection or buſtle for ſelf. If any think there is any good in me, they are miſtaken, and by ſuch thought do injury to my Lord. All good is in him and for him. The greateſt ſatisfaction I can have is becauſe HE IS WHAT HE IS; and *will be ſo for ever*. If he ſave me, it muſt be gratuitouſly; for I have neither merit nor deſert.

I AM aſtoniſhed that any ſhould place confidence in ſuch a pooor nothing creature as I am. I have ſometimes ſaid it. Nevertheleſs, I anſwer what they aſk without difficulty. My own will and inclinations are vaniſhed. Poverty and nakedneſs are my portion. Sometimes indeed I could wiſh to undergo the worſt of ſufferings, ſo that ſouls might be brought thereby to know and love GOD.

I DEARLY love the church: whatever wounds that wounds me. I ſeek nothing for myſelf. I ſtudy nothing; but there are given me immediately, as occaſion requires, the moſt weighty and powerful words. If I wanted to have them they would eſcape me, and I could by no means catch or recover them. When I have ſomething to ſay, if I am interrupted, all is loſt. I am then like a child from whom his apple is ſecreted. He looks about for it, but in vain: it is gone.

I feel the loſs for a moment, but forget it inſtantly. My GOD keeps me in an extreme ſimplicity, godly ſincerity, uprightneſs of heart, and enlargedneſs of ſpirit, in ſuch ſort that, as to particular things, I ſeem to look from and above them, and to ſee nothing at all of them except when occaſions preſent them.

HE gives me a free air and manner with numbers of various people who come to ſee me; and makes me diſcourſe with them, not according to any diſpoſitions of mine, but according to theirs. I am not afraid of any of them laying ſnares for me in what they ſay. Conſcious of my own innocence and uprightneſs, I cannot have recourſe to precautions in any of theſe caſes. Oh carnal prudence! How oppoſite do I find thee to the ſimplicity of JESUS CHRIST! I leave thee to thy partiſans. As for me, all my prudence, my wiſdom, is in following him in his ſimple and lowly appearance: And if to change my conduct would make me an Empreſs, I could not do it; or were my ſimplicity to cauſe me all the heavieſt ſufferings I could not depart from it.

NOTHING is greater than GOD, nothing leſs than *me*. He is rich, I am poor; and yet I want nothing. Life or death, time or eternity, all is equal to me. All is eternity, all is GOD, and GOD is love. All good is in him and of him and for him. What I have ſaid, or written, is all paſt away from me. I remember little or nothing of it. I want neither juſtification nor eſteem. I want nothing but GOD and his glory. Let him then, if he ſees it beſt, glorify himſelf by my deſtruction, or by re-eſtabliſhing my reputation. The one or the other bears equal weight in the balance with me.

MY children, I will not deceive or miſlead you. It belongs to GOD to enlighten you, and to give you

you eſteem or diſeſteem for me. I want only to keep my place and go no more out, no more to move from my centre. I pray GOD to enlighten you always, to give you thereby the clear diſcernment of his holy will, that no falſe light may ever lead you to the precipice.

O MY dear children, open your eyes to the light of truth. *Holy Father, ſanctify them through thy truth.* Thy divine word has ſpoken to them through my mouth. CHRIST alone is the Truth. He ſaid of his Apoſtles, *For their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, that they alſo may be ſanctified through the truth.* Oh ſay the ſame thing to my children. Sanctify thyſelf in them and for them. It is being truly ſactified in all holineſs, to have none of our own but the holineſs of JESUS CHRIST. Let him alone be all in all in us and for us, that the work of ſanctification may be carried on through the experimental knowledge of the divine truth. To him belongeth all wiſdom, ſtrength, greatneſs, power and glory; to us poverty, emptineſs, weakneſs, miſery, and what not! Let us abide in our nothingneſs, paying homage to his HOLINESS: Then ſhall we find in him all that we want. If we ſeek for any thing for SELF out of him, then however holy he may appear to us, we are liars, and the truth abideth not in us. We deceive ourſelves, and in that ſtate ſhall never be the ſaints of GOD,—for they, having no other holineſs than his, have renounced all ſelfiſh uſurpation of his ſacred rights.

HOLY FATHER, I have committed into thine hands thoſe whom thou haſt given me; keep them in thy truth, that the lie may not come near them; for to attribute any thing to one's ſelf is to be in the lie. Make them know this to be the great truth of which thou art jealous. All language which

which deviates from this principle is falſhood. He who ſpeaks the ALL OF GOD AND NOTHING OF THE CREATURE, is in the truth, and the truth dwelleth in him, uſurpation and ſelfiſhneſs being baniſhed from him. My Children, receive this inſtruction from your mother, and it will procure you life. Receive it through her, not as from her, but as of GOD, and to GOD. Amen! LORD JESUS CHRIST!

CONCLUSION.

I INTREAT all ſuch as ſhall read this, not to think hardly of the perſons, who through a zeal, perhaps too bitter, have puſh'd things ſo far againſt a woman, and againſt one ſo ſubmiſſive; becauſe, *as Taulerus ſays* in his inſtitutions, Chap. xi. "GOD willing to purify a ſoul by ſufferings, "might permit an infinite number of well diſpoſed "perſons to fall into darkneſs and blindneſs toward "that ſoul, in order to prepare this choſen veſſel, "by the raſh bias of their judgments in ſuch a "ſtate of ignorance; but that at laſt, after having purified this veſſel, he will take away the "veil ſooner or later, from their eyes, not treating them with rigour for a fault which they have "committed through a hidden conduct of his adorable providence.—I ſay much more, that "ſooner would GOD ſend an angel from heaven, to refine this choſen veſſel through tribulations, than leave it without ſufferings."

December 1709.

[HERE ſhe left off her own Narrative, though ſhe lived a retired life above ſeven years after this date. What ſhe had wrote being only done in obedience to the commands of her director. She died the 9th of *June*, 1717, at *Blois*, in the ſeventy-eth Year of her age.

A

SHORT AND EASY METHOD

OF

PRAYER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

MADAM J. M. B. de la MOTHE

GUION,

By THOMAS DIGBY BROOKE.

THE TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

THE following excellent book was the firſt eſſay of the truly pious Madam GUION; it was, quickly after its publication, diſperſed through great part of France; and it proved the happy inſtrument of many converſions. Thoſe who were athirſt for righteouſneſs, eagerly imbibed the ſimple and efficacious precepts it contains; and thoſe who had already made advances in the Divine Life were convinced of the truth of their way, and found ample inſtructions how to proceed. None who were advocates for genuine piety, could be offended at it; as the moſt ſalutary inſtructions for the attainment of Chriſtian Perfection are enforced, without being blended with ſuch matters of opinion as cauſe offence.

Through the treatiſe, it is certain, that there are two fundamental truths taken for granted, namely, THE FALL

FALL and THE REDEMPTION: and, indeed, whoſoever doth not inwardly feel the former, cannot experience the benefit of the latter; he hath no buſineſs with this book, nor even with The Bible; "he is whole, and "needeth not a Phyſician.

Should but a few of my Chriſtian Brethren reap advantage from this attempt to bring to light a treaſure that has lain ſo long hidden and unnoticed, it would be, not only an abundant recompence for any little trouble I may have had in the tranſlation, but alſo an encouragement to publiſh ſome other pieces of this illuminated Author.

THE AUTHOR's PREFACE.

THIS little treatiſe, conceived in great ſimplicity, was not originally intended for publication: it was written for a few individuals, who were deſirous to love GOD with their whole heart; ſome of whom, becauſe of the profit they received in reading the manuſcript, wiſhed to obtain copies of it; and, on this account alone, it was committed to the preſs.

It ſtill remains in its original ſimplicity, without any cenſure on the various Divine Leadings of others: and we ſubmit the whole to the judgment of thoſe, who are ſkilled and experienced in Divine matters; requeſting them, however, not to decide, without firſt entering into the main deſign of the Author, which is to induce the world to love GOD, and to ſerve him with comfort and ſucceſs, in a ſimple and eaſy manner, adapted to thoſe who are unqualified for learned and deep reſearches, and are, indeed, incapable of any thing but a hearty deſire to be truly devoted to GOD.

An unprejudiced reader may find, hidden under the moſt common expreſſions, a ſecret unction, which will excite him to ſeek after that Sovereign Good, whom all ſhould wiſh to enjoy.

In ſpeaking of the attainment of perfection, the word FACILITY is uſed; becauſe GOD is, indeed, found with facility, when we ſeek him within ourſelves. But, in contradiction to this, ſome, perhaps, may urge that paſſage in St. John, "Ye ſhall ſeek me, and ſhall not "find me:" (Chap. vii. 34.) this apparent difficulty, however, is removed by another paſſage, where he, who

who cannot contradict himſelf, hath ſaid to all, "ſeek "and ye ſhall find." (Matt. vii. 7.) It is true, indeed, that he who would ſeek GOD, and is yet unwilling to forſake his ſins, ſhall not find him, becauſe he ſeeks not aright; and, therefore, it is added, "Ye ſhall die in "your ſins." On the other hand, he, who diligently ſeeks GOD in his heart, and that he may draw near unto him ſincerely forſakes his ſin, ſhall infallibly find him.

A Life of Piety appears ſo formidable, and The Spirit of Prayer of ſuch difficult attainment, that moſt perſons are diſcouraged from taking a ſingle ſtep towards it. The difficulties inſeparable from all great undertakings, are, indeed, either nobly ſurmounted, or left to ſubſiſt in all their terrors, juſt as Succeſs is the object of deſpair or hope. I have, therefore, endeavoured to ſhew the facility of the method propoſed in this treatiſe, the great advantages to be derived from it, and the certainty of their attainment by thoſe that faithfully perſevere. O were we once truly ſenſible of the Goodneſs of GOD toward his poor creatures, and of his infinite deſire to communicate Himſelf unto them, we ſhould not affright ourſelves with ideal monſters, nor deſpair of obtaining that good which He is ſo earneſt to beſtow: "He that "ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us "all; how ſhall he not, with him, alſo freely give us "all things?" (Rom. vii. 32.) But we want courage and perſeverance; we have both, to a high degree, in our temporal concerns, but want them in "the one thing "needful." (Luke x. 42.)

If any think, that GOD is not eaſily to be found in this way of Simple Love and Pure Adherence, let them not, on my teſtimoney, alter their opinion, but rather make trial of it; and their own experience will convince them, that the reality far exceeds all my repreſentations of it.

Beloved reader, peruſe this little tract with an humble, ſincere and candid ſpirit, and not with an inclination to cavil and criticiſe, and you will not fail to reap ſome degree of profit from it. It was written with a hearty deſire that you might wholly devote yourſelf to GOD; receive it, then, with a like deſire for your own perfection: for nothing more is intended by it, than to invite the Simple and the Child-like to approach their FATHER, who delights in the humble confidence of his children,

children, and is grieved at the ſmalleſt inſtance of their diffidence or diſtruſt. With a ſincere deſire, therefore, to forſake ſin, ſeek nothing from the inartificial method here propoſed, but THE LOVE OF GOD, and you ſhall undoubtedly obtain it.

Without ſetting up our opinions above thoſe of others, we mean only with truth and candour, to declare, from our own experience, and the experience of others, the happy effects produced by thus SIMPLY FOLLOWING OUR LORD.

As this treatiſe was intended only to inſtruct in PRAYER, there are many things which we reſpect and eſteem, totally omitted, as not immediately relative to our main ſubject: it is, however, certain, that nothing will be found herein to diſguſt or offend, provided it be read in the ſpirit with which it was written; and it is ſtill more certain, that thoſe who in right earneſt make trial of the way, will find we have written THE TRUTH.

It is Thou alone, O HOLY JESUS, who loveſt ſimplicity and innocence, "and whoſe delight is to dwell "with the children of men." (Prov. viii. 3.) with thoſe who are, indeed, willing to become "Little Children;" it is Thou alone, who canſt render this little work ſalutary! Imprint it then on the hearts of all who read it, and lead them to ſeek Thee within themſelves, where Thou repoſeſt as in the manger, waiting to receive proofs of their love, and to give them teſtimony of thine. Yet alas! they may ſtill loſe theſe unſpeakable advantages by their negligence and inſenſibility! But it belongeth unto Thee, O thou INCREATED LOVE! thou SILENT AND ETERNAL WORD! it belongeth unto Thee, to awaken, attract, and convert; to make Thyſelf be heard, taſted, and beloved! I know Thou canſt do it; and I truſt Thou wilt do it by this humble work, which belongeth entirely to Thee, proceedeth wholly from Thee, and tendeth only to Thee! And, O moſt Gracious and adorable Saviour!

TO THEE BE ALL THE GLORY!

A SHORT

A SHORT AND EASY METHOD OF PRAYER.

CHAP. I.

That all are capable of Prayer.

WHAT a dreadful deluſion hath prevailed over the greater part of mankind, in ſuppoſing that they are not called to a ſtate of prayer! whereas all are capable of prayer, and are called thereto, as all are called to and are capable of ſalvation.

PRAYER is the application of the heart to GOD, and the internal exerciſe of love. St. Paul hath enjoined us to "pray without ceaſing;" (1 Theſſ. v. 17.) and our Lord ſaith, "I ſay unto you all, watch and pray": (Mar. xiii, 33. 37.) and all therefore may, and all ought to practiſe prayer. I grant that meditation is attainable but by few, for few are capable of it; and therefore my beloved brethren, who are athirſt for ſalvation, meditative prayer is not the prayer which GOD requires of you, nor which we would recommend.

LET all pray: we ſhould live by prayer, as we ſhould live by love. "I counſel you to buy of me gold "tried in the fire, that ye may be rich:" (Rev. iii. 8.) this is much more eaſily obtained than we can conceive. "Come, all ye that are athirſt, to theſe living waters;" nor loſe your precious moments in "hewing out ciſ-"terns that will hold no water." (John vii. 37. Jerem. ii. 13.) Come, ye famiſhing ſouls, who find nought whereon to feed; come and ye ſhall be fully ſatisfied! Come, ye poor afflicted ones, who groan beneath your load of wretchedneſs and pain, and ye ſhall find eaſe and comfort! Come, ye ſick, to your phyſician, and be not fearful of approaching him, becauſe ye are filled with diſeaſes; expoſe them to his view, and they ſhall be healed!

Chil-

Children draw near to your Father, and he will embrace you in the arms of love! Come ye poor ſtray wandering ſheep, return to your ſhepherd! Come, ſinners, to your Saviour! Come ye dull ignorant and illiterate, ye who think yourſelves the moſt incapable of prayer! ye are more peculiarly called and adapted thereto. Let all without exception come, for JESUS CHRIST hath called all. Yet let not thoſe come, who are without a heart; they are not aſked; for there muſt be a heart, that there may be love. But who is without a heart? O come, then, give this heart to GOD; and here learn how to make the donation. All who are deſirous of prayer, may eaſily pray, enabled by thoſe ordinary graces and gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT which are common to all men.

Prayer is the guide to perfection, and the ſovereign good; it delivers us from every vice, and obtains us every virtue; for the one great means to become perfect, is to walk in the preſence of GOD: he himſelf hath ſaid "walk in my preſence and be ye perfect." (Gen. xvii. 1.) It is by prayer alone, that we are brought into this preſence, and maintained in it without interruption.

You muſt then learn a ſpecies of prayer, which may be exerciſed at all times; which doth not obſtruct outward employments; and which may be equally practiſed by princes, kings, prelates, prieſts and magiſtrates, ſoldiers and children, tradeſmen, labourers, women and ſick perſons: It cannot therefore, be the prayer of the head, but of the heart; not a prayer of the underſtanding alone, which is ſo limited in its operations that it can have but one object at one time; but the prayer of the heart is not interrupted by the exerciſes of reaſon: Indeed nothing can interrupt this prayer, but irregular and diſordered affections: and when once we have taſted of GOD, and the ſweetneſs of his love, we ſhall find it impoſſible to reliſh ought but himſelf?

Nothing is ſo eaſily obtained as the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of GOD for, "in him we live, move and "have our being;" and he is more deſirous to give himſelf into us, than we can be to receive him; and to ſeek aright, is eaſier and more natural to us than breathing. Though you think yourſelve ever ſo ſtupid, dull and incapable of ſublime attainments, yet by prayer, you may live in GOD himſelf with leſs difficulty or interruption than

than you live in the vital air. Will it not be highly ſinful to neglect prayer? but this I truſt you will not, when you have learnt the method, which is exceedingly eaſy.

CHAP. II.

The method of praying.

THERE are two ways of introducing a ſoul into prayer, which ſhould for ſome time be purſued; the one is meditation, the other is reading accompanied with meditation.

Meditative reading is the chooſing ſome important practical or ſpeculative truth, always preferring the practical, and proceeding thus: whatever truth you have choſen, read only a ſmall portion of it, endeavouring to taſte and digeſt it, to extract the eſſence and ſubſtance thereof, and proceed no farther while any ſavour or reliſh remains in the paſſage: when this ſubſides, take up your book again, and proceed as before, ſeldom reading more than half a page at a time; for it is not the quantity that is read, but the manner of reading, that yields us profit. Thoſe who read faſt, reap no more advantage, than a bee would by only ſkimming over the ſurface of the flower, inſtead of waiting to penetrate into it, and extract its ſweets. Much reading is rather for ſcholaſtic ſubjects, than divine truths: indeed to receive real profit from ſpiritual books, we muſt read as I have deſcribed; and I am certain, if that method were purſued, we ſhould become gradually habituated to, and more fully diſpoſed for prayer.

Meditation which is the other method, is to be practiſed at an appropriated ſeaſon, and not in the time of reading. I believe the beſt manner of meditating is as follows. When by any act of lively faith, you are placed in the Preſence of GOD, recollect ſome truth wherein there is ſubſtance and food: pauſe gently and ſweetly thereon, not to employ the reaſon, but merely to calm and fix the mind: for you muſt obſerve, that your particular exerciſe ſhould ever be the preſence of GOD; your ſubject therefore, ſhould rather ſerve to ſtay the mind, than exerciſe the underſtanding. From this procedure, it will neceſſarily follow, that the lively faith in a GOD immediately preſent in our inmoſt ſoul, will produce an eager and vehement preſſing inwardly

into ourſelves, and a reſtraining all our ſenſes from wandering abroad: this ſerves to extricate us ſpeedily from numberleſs diſtractions, to remove us far from external objects, and to bring us nigh unto our GOD, who is only to be found in our inmoſt centre, which is the Holy of Holies wherein he dwelleth. He hath even promiſed "to come and make his abode with him that doth his "will." (John xiv. 23.) St Auguſtine accuſes himſelf of waſting his time, by not having from the firſt ſought GOD in this manner of prayer.

When we are thus fully introverted, and warmly penetrated throughout with a lively ſenſe of the Divine Preſence; when the ſenſes are all recollected, and withdrawn from the circumference to the centre, and the ſoul is ſweetly and ſilently employed on the truths we have read, not in reaſoning, but in the feeding thereon, and animating the will by affection, rather than fatiguing the underſtanding by ſtudy; when, I ſay, the affections are in this ſtate, which, however difficult it may appear at firſt, is, as I ſhall hereafter ſhew, eaſily attainable; we muſt allow them ſweetly to repoſe, and peacefully to drink in that of which they have taſted: for as a perſon may enjoy the flavour of the fineſt viand in maſtication, yet receive no nouriſhment therefrom, if he does not ceaſe the action and ſwallow the food; ſo, when our affections are enkindled, if we endeavour to ſtir them up yet more, we extinguiſh the flame, and the ſoul is deprived of its nouriſhment; we ſhould, therefore, in ſtillneſs and repoſe, with reſpect confidence and love, ſwallow the bleſſed food of which we have taſted: this method is, indeed, highly neceſſary; and will advance the ſoul better in a ſhort time, than any other in a courſe of years.

I have mentioned, that our direct and principal exerciſe ſhould conſiſt in the contemplation of the Divine Preſence: we ſhould be alſo exceedingly watchful and diligent in recalling our diſſipated ſenſes, as the moſt eaſy method of overcoming diſtractions; for a direct conteſt and oppoſition only ſerves to irritate and augment them; whereas, by ſinking down under a ſenſe and perception of a preſent GOD, and by ſimply turning inwards, we wage inſenſibly a very advantageous, though indirect war with them.

It

IT is proper here to caution beginners againſt wandering from truth to truth, and from ſubject to ſubject: the right way to penetrate every divine truth, to enjoy its full reliſh, and to imprint it on the heart, is dwelling on it whilſt its ſavour continues.

THOUGH recollection is difficult in the beginning, from the habit the ſoul has acquired of being always from home; yet, when by the violence it hath done itſelf, it becometh a little accuſtomed to it, it will ſoon be rendered perfectly eaſy, and become delightful. Such is the experimental taſte, and ſenſe of his Preſence, and ſuch the efficacy of thoſe graces, which that GOD beſtows, whoſe One Will towards his creatures is to communicate himſelf unto them!

CHAP. III.

Inſtructions for thoſe who are wholly illiterate.

THOSE who have not been learned to read, are not, on that account, excluded from prayer: for the great book which teacheth all things, and which is legible as well internally as externally, is JESUS CHRIST himſelf.

The method they ſhould practiſe is this: They ſhould firſt learn this fundamental rule, that the kingdom of "GOD is within them," (Luke xvii. 21.) and that it is there only it muſt be ſought.

It is as incumbent on the Clergy to inſtruct their pariſhioners in prayer, as in their catechiſm. It is true they tell them the end of their creation; but ſhould they not give them ſufficient inſtructions how they may attain it? They ſhould be taught to begin by an act of profound adoration and abaſement before GOD; and cloſing the corporeal eyes, endeavour to open thoſe of the ſoul: they ſhould then collect themſelves inwardly, and, by a lively faith in GOD, as dwelling within them, pierce into the Divine Preſence; not ſuffering the ſenſes to wander abroad, but withholding them as much as may be in due ſubjection.

THEY ſhould then repeat "The Lord's Prayer," in their native tongue; pondering a little upon the meaning of the words, and the infinite willingneſs of that GOD who dwells within them, to become, indeed, "Their Father." In this ſtate let them pour out their

wants before him; and when they have pronounced the endearing word, "Father," remain a few moments in a reſpectful ſilence, waiting to have the will of this their heavenly Father made manifeſt unto them. Again beholding themſelves in the ſtate of a feeble child, ſorely bruiſed by repeated falls, and defiled in the mire, deſtitute of ſtrength to keep up, or of power to cleanſe himſelf, they ſhould lay their deplorable ſituation open to their Father's view in humble confuſion; now ſighing out a few words of love and plaintive ſorrow, and again ſinking into profound ſilence before him. Then continuing The Lord's Prayer, let them beſeech this King of Glory to reign in them, yielding to his love the juſt claim he has over them, and reſigning up themſelves wholly to his divine government,

If they feel an inclination to peace and ſilence, let them continue the words of the prayer ſo long as this ſenſation holds; and when it ſubſides, go on with the ſecond petition, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in "heaven!" upon which theſe humble ſupplicants muſt beſeech God to accompliſh, in them, and by them, all his will; and muſt ſurrender their hearts and freedom into his hands, to be diſpoſed of as he pleaſeth. And finding that the beſt employment of the will is to love, they ſhould deſire to love God with all their ſtrength, and implore him for his pure love; but all this ſweetly and peacefully: and ſo of the reſt of the prayer, in which the clergy may inſtruct them. But they ſhould not overburthen themſelves with frequent repetitions of ſet forms, or ſtudied prayers; (Mat. vi. 7.) for the Lord's Prayer once repeated as I have juſt deſcribed, will produce abundant fruit.

At other times they ſhould place themſelves as ſheep before their ſhepherd, looking up to him for their true ſubſtantial food: "O Divine Shepherd, thou feedeſt "thy flock with thyſelf, and art indeed, their daily nou-"riſhment!" They may alſo repreſent unto him the neceſſities of their families: but all upon this principle, and in this one great view of faith, that "God is "within them."

The ideas we form of the Divine Being fall infinitely ſhort of what he is: a lively faith in his preſence is ſufficient: for we muſt not form any image of the Deity; though we may of the ſecond perſon in the ever-bleſſed Tri-

Trinity, beholding him in the various ſtates of his incarnation, from his birth to his crucifixion, or in ſome other ſtate or myſtery, provided the ſoul always ſeeks for thoſe views in its inmoſt ground or centre. Again, we may look to him as our phyſician, and preſent to his healing influence all our maladies; but always without violence or perturbation; and from time to time with pauſes of ſilence, that being intermingled with the action, the ſilence may be gradually extended, and our own exertion leſſened; till at length, by continually yielding to God's operations, they gain the compleat aſcendency; as ſhall be hereafter explained.

When the Divine Preſence is granted us, and we gradually reliſh ſilence and repoſe, this experimental feeling and taſte of the preſence of God introduces the ſoul into the ſecond degree of prayer, which, by proceeding in the manner I have deſcribed, is attainable as well by the illiterate, as the learned: ſome favoured ſouls indeed are indulged with it, even from the beginning.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſecond degree of Prayer.

Some call the ſecond degree of prayer, "The pray-"er of Contemplation," The "Prayer of faith "and ſtillneſs;" and others call it, "The prayer of "ſimplicity." I ſhall here uſe this latter appellation, as being more juſt than any of the former, which imply a much more exalted ſtate of prayer than that I am now treating of.

When the ſoul has been for ſome time exerciſed in the way I have mentioned, ſhe finds that ſhe is gradually enabled to approach God with facility; that recollection is attended with much leſs difficulty, and that prayer becomes eaſy, ſweet and delightful: ſhe knows that this is the true way of finding God; and ſhe feels "his "name is as ointment poured forth." (Cant. i—3.) But the method muſt now be altered, and that which I preſcribe, followed with courage and fidelity, without being diſturbed at the difficulties we may encounter therein.

Firſt, as ſoon as the ſoul by faith places herſelf in "The preſence of God," and becomes recollected be-

fore him, let her remain thus for a little time in a profound and reſpectful ſilence.

But if, at the beginning, in forming her act of faith ſhe feels ſome little pleaſing ſenſe of the Divine Preſence; let her remain there without being troubled for a ſubject, and proceed no farther, but carefully cheriſh this ſenſation while it continues: as ſoon as it abates, ſhe may excite the will by ſome tender affection; and if by the firſt moving thereof, ſhe finds herſelf reinſtated in her ſweet peace, let her there remain: the ſmothered fire muſt be gently fanned, but as ſoon as it is kindled, we muſt ceaſe that effort, leſt we extinguiſh it by our own activity. I would warmly recommend it to all, never to finiſh prayer, without remaining ſome little time after in a reſpectful ſilence. It is alſo of the greateſt importance, for the ſoul to go to prayer with courage; and ſuch a pure and diſintereſted love, as ſeeks nothing from GOD, but the ability to pleaſe him, and to do his will: for a ſervant who only proportions his diligence to his hope of reward, renders himſelf unworthy of all reward. Go then to prayer, not that ye may enjoy ſpiritual delights, but that ye may be either full or empty, juſt as it pleaſeth GOD: this will preſerve you in an evenneſs of ſpirit, in diſertion as well as in conſolation, and prevent your being ſurprized at aridity or the apparent repulſes of GOD.

CHAP. V.

Of ſpiritual Aridity.

THOUGH GOD hath no other deſire than to impart himſelf to the loving ſoul that ſeeks him, yet he frequently conceals himſelf from her, that ſhe may be rouſed from ſloth, and impelled to ſeek him with fidelity and love. But with what abundant goodneſs doth he recompenſe the faithfulneſs of his beloved? And how ſweetly are theſe apparent withdrawings of himſelf ſucceeded by the conſoling careſſes of love? At theſe ſeaſons, we are apt to believe, either that it proves our fidelity, and evinces a greater ardour of affection, to ſeek him by an exertion of our own ſtrength and activity; or that this exertion will induce him the more ſpeedily to reviſit us. No, no, my dear ſouls, believe me, this is not the right procedure in this degree of prayer; with patient love, with ſelf abaſement and humiliation, with

with the reiterated breathings of an ardent but peaceful affection, and with ſilence full of the moſt profound reſpect, you muſt wait the return of the Beloved: thus only you will demonſtrate, that it is himſelf alone, and his good pleaſure, that you ſeek: and not the ſelfiſh delights of your own ſenſations. Hence it is ſaid, (Eccleſ. ii. 2, 3.) "Be not impatient in the time of dryneſs and "obſcurity; ſuffer the ſuſpenſions and delays of the con-"ſolations of GOD; cleave unto him, and wait upon "him patiently, that thy life may increaſe and be re-"newed."

Be ye, therefore, patient in prayer, though, during life, you can do nought elſe, than wait the return of the Beloved, in deep humiliation, calm contentment, and patient reſignation to his will. And yet how this moſt excellent prayer may be intermingled with the ſighings of plaintive love! This conduct indeed, is moſt pleaſing to the heart of JESUS; and, above all others, will, as it were, compel him to return.

CHAP. VI.

Of Abandonment, or Reſignation.

IT is now we ſhould begin to abandon and give up our whole exiſtence unto GOD, from the ſtrong and poſitive conviction, that the occurrence of every moment is agreeable to his immeditate will and permiſſion, and juſt ſuch as our ſtate requires. This conviction will make us reſigned in all things; and accept of all that happens, not as from the creature, but as from GOD himſelf.

But I conjure you, my dearly beloved, who ſincerely wiſh to give up yourſelves to GOD, that after you have made the donation, you will not ſnatch yourſelf back again: remember, a gift once preſented, is no longer at the diſpoſal of the donor.

Abandonment is a matter of the greateſt importance in our proceſs; it is the key to the inner court; ſo that whoſoever knoweth truly how to abandon himſelf, ſoon becomes perfect: we muſt, therefore continue ſtedfaſt and immoveable therein; nor liſten to the voice of natural reaſon. Great faith produces great abandonment: we muſt confide in GOD, "hoping againſt hope." (Rom. iv. 18.)

Abandonment is the caſting off all ſelfiſh care, that we may be altogether at the Divine Diſpoſal. All Chriſtians are exhorted to this reſignation; for it is ſaid to all, "Be not anxious for tomorrow; for your Heavenly "Father knoweth all that is neceſſary for you." (Matt. xx. 25.) "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he "ſhall direct thy paths." (Prov. iii. 6.) "Commit "thy ways unto the Lord and thy thoughts ſhall be eſta-"bliſhed." (Prov. xvi. 3.) Commit thy ways unto "the Lord, and he himſelf will bring it to paſs." (Pſalm. xxxvi. 5.)

Our abandonment then ſhould be as fully applied to external as internal things, giving up all our concerns into the hands of GOD, forgetting ourſelves, and thinking only of him; by which the heart will remain always diſengaged, free and at peace. It is practiſed by continually loſing our own will in the will of GOD; by renouncing every particular inclination as ſoon as it ariſes, however good it may appear, that we may ſtand in indifference with reſpect to ourſelves, and only will that which GOD from eternity had willed; by being reſigned in all things, whether for ſoul or body, whether for time or eternity; by leaving what is paſt in oblivion; what is to come to Providence, and devoting the preſent moment to GOD, which brings with itſelf GOD's eternal order, and is as infallible a declaration to us of his will as it is inevitable and common to all; by attributing nothing that befalls us to the creature, but regarding all things in GOD, and looking upon all, excepting only our ſins, as infallibly proceeding from him. Surrender yourſelves, then to be led and diſpoſed of juſt as GOD pleaſeth, with reſpect both to your outward and inward ſtate.

CHAP. VII.

Of Sufferings,

BE ye patient under all the ſufferings which GOD is pleaſed to ſend you: if your love to him be pure; you will not ſeek him leſs on Calvary, than on Tabor; and, ſurely, he ſhould be as much loved on that as on this, ſince it was on Calvary, he made the greater diſplay of his own Love for you.

Be not like thoſe, who give themſelves to him at one ſeaſon, and withdraw from him at another: they give themſelves only to be careſſed: and wreſt themſelves back again, when they come to be crucified, or at leaſt turn for conſolation to the creature.

No, beloved ſouls, ye will not find conſolation in ought, but in the love of the Croſs, and in total abandonment: "Who favoureth not the Croſs, favoureth not the things that be of GOD." (Mat. xvi. 23.) It is impoſſible to love GOD without loving the Croſs; and a heart that favours the Croſs, finds the bittereſt things to be ſweet: "A ſa-"miſhed ſoul findeth bitter things ſweet:" (Job. vi. 1.) becauſe ſhe findeth herſelf an hungered for her GOD, in proportion as ſhe findeth herſelf an hungered for the Croſs. GOD giveth the Croſs, and the Croſs giveth us GOD.

We may be aſſured, that there is an internal advancement, where there is an advancement in the way of the Croſs: Abandonment and the Croſs go hand in hand together.

As ſoon as any thing preſents itſelf, as a ſuffering, and you feel a repugnance againſt it, reſign yourſelf immediately unto GOD with reſpect to it, and give yourſelf up to him in ſacrifice; you ſhall find, that, when the Croſs arrives, it will not be ſo very burthenſome, becauſe you had diſpoſed yourſelf to a willing reception of it. This, however, does not prevent you from feeling its weight as ſome have imagined; for when we do not feel the Croſs, we do not ſuffer it. A ſenſibility of ſufferings conſtitutes a principal part of the ſufferings themſelves. JESUS CHRIST himſelf was willing to ſuffer its utmoſt rigours. We often bear the Croſs in weakneſs, at other times in ſtrength: all ſhould be equal to us in the will of GOD.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Myſteries.

IT may be objected, that, by this method, we ſhall have no myſteries imprinted on our minds: but it is quite the reverſe; for it is the peculiar means of imparting them to the ſoul. JESUS CHRIST, to whom we are abandoned, and whom, "we follow as the way, "whom we hear as the truth, and who animates us as "the life," (John xiv. 6.) in imprinting himſelf on the ſoul, impreſſes the characters of his different ſtates; and to bear all the ſtates of JESUS CHRIST, is far more ſublime

ſublime, than merely to reaſon concerning them. St. Paul bore in his body the ſtates of JESUS CHRIST: "I bear in my body," ſays he, "the marks of the "LORD JESUS;" (Gal. vi. 17) but he does not ſay, that he reaſoned thereon.

In our acts of reſignation, JESUS CHRIST frequently communicates ſome peculiar views, or revelations of his ſtates: theſe we ſhould thankfully receive, and diſpoſe ourſelves for what appeareth to be his will. Indeed, having no other choice, but that of ardently reaching after him, of dwelling ever with him, and of ſinking into nothingneſs before him, we ſhould accept indiſcriminately all his diſpenſations, whether obſcurity or illumination, fecundity or barrenneſs, imbecility or ſtrength, ſweetneſs or bitterneſs, temptations, diſtractions, pain, wearineſs, or doubtings; and none of all theſe ſhould, for one moment, retard our courſe. GOD engages ſome, for whole years, in the contemplation and enjoyment of a particular myſtery; the ſimple view or contemplation of which gathers the ſoul inward, provided it be faithful: but as ſoon as GOD is pleaſed to withdraw this view from the ſoul, it ſhould freely yield to the deprivation. Some are very uneaſy at ſeeing their inability to meditate on certain myſteries; but this diſquietude hath no juſt foundation, ſince an affectionate attachment to GOD includes in itſelf every ſpecies of devotion: for whoſoever, in repoſe and quiet is united to GOD alone, is, indeed, moſt excellently and effectually applied to every divine myſtery: the Love of GOD comprehends, in itſelf, the love of all that appertains to him.

CHAP. IX.

Of Virtue.

IT is thus we acquire virtue, with facility and certainty; for, as GOD is the fountain and principle of all virtue, we poſſeſs all in the poſſeſſion of himſelf; and in proportion as we approach toward his poſſeſſion, in like proportion do we riſe into the moſt eminent virtues. For all virtue is but as a maſque, an outſide appearance mutable as our garments, if it doth not ſpring up, and then, indeed, it is genuine, eſſential, and permanent: "The beauty of the Kings daughter proceeds from "within," ſaith David. (Pſal. xlv. 14.) Theſe ſouls, above

above all others, practiſe virtue in the moſt eminent degree, though they advert not to any particular virtue: GOD, to whom they are united, carries them to the moſt extenſive practice of it; he is exceedingly jealous over them, and prohibits them the taſte of any pleaſure but in himſelf. What a hungering for ſufferings have thoſe ſouls, who thus glow with Divine Love? how prone to precipitate into exceſſive auſterities, were they permitted to purſue their own inclinations! They think of nought ſave how they may pleaſe their Beloved: as their ſelf-love abates, they neglect and forget themſelves; and as their love to GOD encreaſes, ſo do ſelf-deteſtation and diſregard to the creature. O was this eaſy method acquired, a method ſo ſuited to all, to the dull and ignorant as well as to the accute and learned, how eaſily would the whole church of GOD be reformed! Love only is required: "Love," ſaith St. Auſtin, "and then do "what you pleaſe." For when we truly love, we cannot have ſo much as a will to any thing that might offend the object of our affections.

CHAP. X.

Of Mortification.

I Will even affirm, that, in any other way, it is next to an impoſſibility to acquire a perfect mortification of the ſenſes and paſſions. The reaſon is obvious; the ſoul gives vigour and energy to the ſenſes, and the ſenſes raiſe and ſtimulate the paſſions; a dead body has neither ſenſations nor paſſions, becauſe its connection with the ſoul is diſſolved.

All endeavours merely to rectify the exterior, impel the ſoul yet farther outward into that about which ſhe is ſo warmly and zealouſly engaged. It is in theſe matters, that her powers are diffuſed and ſcattered abroad; for her application being immediately directed to auſterities, and other externals, ſhe thus invigorates thoſe very ſenſes ſhe is aiming to ſubdue. For the ſenſes have no other ſpring from whence to derive their vigour than the application of the ſoul to themſelves; the degree of their life and activity is proportioned to the degree of attention which the ſoul beſtows upon them; and this life of the ſenſes ſtirs up and provokes the paſſions, inſtead of ſuppreſſing or ſubduing them: auſterities may, indeed, enfeeble the body, but for the reaſons juſt

juſt mentioned, can never take off the keenneſs of the ſenſes, or leſſen their activity. The one only method to effect this, is inward recollection; by which the ſoul is turned, wholly and altogether inward, to poſſeſs a PRESENT GOD. If ſhe directs all her vigour and energy towards this centre of her being, the ſimple act ſeparates and withdraws her from the ſenſes; the exerciſing all her powers internally, leaves them faint and impotent; and the nearer ſhe draws to GOD, the farther, is ſhe ſeparated from the ſenſes, and the leſs are the paſſions influenced by them,

Hence it is, that thoſe, in whom the attractions of grace are very powerful, find the outward man altogether weak and feeble, and even liable to faintings. I do not mean, by this, to diſcourage mortification; for it ſhould ever accompany prayer, according to the ſtrength and ſtate of the perſon, or as obedience will allow. But I ſay, that mortification ſhould not be our principal exerciſe; nor ſhould we preſcribe ourſelves ſuch and ſuch auſterities, but follow ſimply and merely the internal attractions of grace; and being poſſeſſed and occupied with the Divine preſence (without thinking particularly on mortification) GOD will enable us to perform every ſpecies of it; and, moſt aſſuredly, he will give no relaxation to thoſe who abide faithful in their abandonment to him, until he has mortified in them every thing that remains to be mortified. We have only then to continue ſtedfaſt in the utmoſt attention to GOD, and all things will be rightly performed. All are not capable of outward auſterities, but all are capable of this. In the mortification of the eye and ear, which continually ſupply the buſy imagination with new ſubjects, there is little danger of falling into exceſs; but GOD will teach us this alſo, and we have only to follow where his Spirit guides.

The ſoul has a double advantage by proceeding thus: for, in withdrawing from outward objects, ſhe draws the nearer to GOD; and in approaching him, beſides the ſecret ſuſtaining and preſerving power and virtue ſhe receives, ſhe is farther removed from ſin, the nearer her approaches are made; ſo that converſing becomes habitual.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of Converſion.

"BE ye truly converted unto that GOD from whom "ye have ſo deeply revolted." (Iſa. xxxi. 6.) To be truly converted, is to avert wholly from the creature, and turn wholly unto GOD.

For the attainment of ſalvation, it is abſolutely neceſſary, that we ſhould forſake outward ſin, and turn unto righteouſneſs: but this alone is not perfect converſion, which conſiſts in a total change of the whole man from an outward to an inward life.

When the ſoul is once turned to GOD, ſhe finds a wonderful facility in continuing ſtedfaſt in her converſion; and the longer ſhe remains thus converted, the nearer ſhe approaches, and the more firmly ſhe adheres to GOD; and the nearer ſhe draws to him, of neceſſity ſhe is the farther removed from the creature, which is ſo contrary to him: ſo that ſhe is ſo effectually eſtabliſhed and rooted in her converſion, that it becomes habitual, and as it were natural to her. Now we muſt not ſuppoſe, that this is effected by a violent exertion of her own powers; for ſhe is not capable of, nor ſhould ſhe attempt any other co-operation with Divine Grace, than that of endeavouring to withdraw herſelf, from external objects, and to turn inwards: after which ſhe has nothing farther to do, than to continue ſtedfaſt in her adherence to GOD.

GOD has an attractive virtue which draws the ſoul more and more powerfully to himſelf, the nearer ſhe approaches towards him, and in attracting, he purifies and refines her; juſt as it is with a groſs vapour exhaled by the ſun, which, as it gradually aſcends, is rarified and rendered pure: the vapour indeed, contributes to its exhalation only by its paſſiveneſs; but the ſoul co-operates with the attractions of her GOD, by a free and affectionate correſpondence. This kind of introverſion is both eaſy and efficacious, advancing the ſoul naturally, and without conſtraint, becauſe GOD himſelf is her centre.

Every centre has a powerfully attractive virtue; and the more pure and exalted it is, the ſtronger and more irreſiſtable are its attractions. But beſides the potent

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magnetiſm of the centre itſelf, there is, in every creature, a correſpondent tendency to re-union with its peculiar centre, which is vigorous and active in proportion to the ſpirituality and perfection of the ſubject.

As ſoon as any thing is turned towards its centre, its own gravitation inſtigates and accelerates it thereto, unleſs it be withheld by ſome invincible obſtacle: a ſtone held in the hand is no ſooner diſengaged, than by its own weight it falls to the earth as to its centre; ſo alſo water and fire, when un-obſtructed, tend and flow inceſſantly to their principle or centre. Now when the ſoul, by its efforts to abandon outward objects, and gather herſelf inwards, is brought into the influence of the central tendency; without any other exertion, ſhe falls gradually, by the weight of Divine Love, into her proper centre; and the more paſſive and tranquil ſhe remains, and the freer from ſelf-motion and ſelf-exertion, the more rapidly ſhe advances, becauſe the energy of the central attractive virtue is un-obſtructed, and has full liberty for action.

All our care and attention ſhould, therefore, be, to acquire inward recollection: nor let us be diſcouraged by the pains and difficulties we encounter in this exerciſe, which will ſoon be recompenſed, on the part of our GOD, by ſuch abundant ſupplies of grace, as will render the exerciſe perfectly eaſy, provided we be faithful in meekly withdrawing our hearts from outward diſtractions and occupations, and returning to our centre, with affections full of tenderneſs and ſerenity. When at any time the paſſions are turbulent, a gentle retreat inwards unto a preſent GOD, eaſily deadens and pacifies them; and any other way of contending with them, rather irritates than appeaſes them.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Prayer of the ſimple Preſence of GOD.

THE ſoul that is faithful in the exerciſe of love and adherence to God above deſcribed, is aſtoniſhed to feel him gradually taking poſſeſſion of her whole being; ſhe now enjoys a continual ſenſe of that Preſence, which is become as it were natural to her; and this, as well as prayer, is the reſult of habit. She feels an unuſual ſerenity gradually diffuſing itſelf throughout all

all her faculties; and ſilence now wholly conſtitutes her prayer; whilſt GOD communicates an infuſed love, which is the beginning of ineffable bleſſedneſs. O that I were permitted to purſue this ſubject, and deſcribe ſome degrees of the endleſs progreſſion of ſubſequent ſtates! But I now write only for beginners; and ſhall, therefore, proceed no farther, but wait our LORD'S time for publiſhing what may be applicable to every conceivable degree of "ſtature in CHRIST JESUS."

We muſt, however, urge it as a matter of the higheſt import, to ceaſe from ſelf-action and ſelf-exertion, that God himſelf may act alone: he ſaith by the mouth of his Prophet David, "Be ſtill and know that I am God." (Pſ. xlvi. 10.) But the creature is ſo infatuated with a love and attachment to its own working, that it doth not perceive and diſtinguiſh all its operations. She is ignorant that her inability minutely to obſerve the manner of her motion, is occaſioned by the ſwiftneſs of her progreſs; and that the operations of God, in extending and diffuſing their influence, abſorb thoſe of the creature. The ſtars may be ſeen diſtinctly before the ſun riſes; but as his light advances, their rays are gradually abſorbed by his; and they become inviſible, not from the want of light in themſelves, but from the ſuperior effulgence of their chief luminary.

The caſe is ſimilar here; for there is a ſtrong and univerſal light which abſorbs all the little diſtinct lights of the ſoul; they grow faint and diſappear under its powerful influence, and ſelf-activity is now no longer diſtinguiſhable: yet thoſe greatly err, who accuſe this prayer of idleneſs, a charge that can only ariſe from inexperience. If they would but make ſome efforts towards the attainment of this prayer, they would ſoon experience the contrary of what they ſuppoſe, and find their accuſation groundleſs.

This appearance of inaction is, indeed, not the conſequence of ſterility and want, but of fruitfulneſs and abundance; which will be clearly perceived by the experienced ſoul, who will know and feel, that her ſilence is full and unctuous, and the reſult of cauſes totally the reverſe of apathy and barrenneſs. There are two kinds of people that keep ſilence; the one becauſe they have nothing to ſay, the other becauſe they have too much:

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it is ſo with the ſoul in this ſtate; her ſilence is occaſioned by the ſuper-abundance of matter, too great for utterance.

To be drowned, and to die of thirſt, are deaths widely different; yet water may, in ſome ſenſe, be ſaid to cauſe both; abundance deſtroys in one caſe, and want in the other. So in this ſtate the abundance and overflowing of grace ſtill the activity of ſelf; and, therefore, it is of the utmoſt importance to remain as ſilent as poſſible.

The infant hanging at the mother's breaſt, is a lively illuſtration of our ſubject: it begins to draw the milk, by moving its little lips; but when the milk flows abundantly, it is content to ſwallow, and ſuſpends its ſuction: by doing otherwiſe, it would only hurt itſelf, ſpill the milk, and be obliged to quit the breaſt.

We muſt act in like manner in the beginning of Prayer, by exerting the lip of the affections; but as ſoon as the milk of Divine Grace flows freely, we have nothing to do, but, in repoſe and ſtillneſs, ſweetly to imbibe it; and when it ceaſes to flow, we muſt again ſtir up the affections as the infant moves its lips. Whoever acts otherwiſe, cannot turn this grace to advantage; which is beſtowed, to allure and draw the ſoul into the repoſe of Love, and not into the multiplicity of Self.

But what becometh of this child, who gently and without motion drinketh in the milk? Who would believe that it can thus receive nouriſhment? Yet the more peacefully it feeds, the better it thrives. What, I ſay, becomes of this infant? It drops gently aſleep on its mother's boſom. So the ſoul that is tranquil and peaceful in prayer, ſinketh frequently into a myſtic ſlumber, wherein all her powers are at reſt; till, at length ſhe is wholly fitted for that ſtate, of which ſhe enjoys theſe tranſient anticipations. In this proceſs the ſoul is led naturally, without effort, art, or ſtudy.

The Interior is not a ſtrong hold, to be taken by ſtorm and violence; but a kingdom of peace, which is to be gained only by Love.

If any will thus purſue the little path I have pointed out, it will lead them to infuſed prayer. GOD demands nothing extraordinary nor difficult; on the contrary, he is beſt pleaſed by a ſimple and child-like conduct.

That which is moſt ſublime and elevated in religion, is the eaſieſt attained: the moſt neceſſary ſacraments are

are the leaſt difficult. It is thus alſo in natural things: if you would go to ſea, embark on a river, and you will be conveyed to it inſenſibly and without exertion. Would you go to GOD, follow this ſweet and ſimple path, and you will arrive at the deſired object, with an eaſe and expedition that will amaze you. O that you would but once make the trial! how ſoon would you find that all I have advanced falls ſhort of the reality, and that your own experience will carry you infinitely beyond it! Is it fear that prevents you from inſtantly caſting yourſelf into thoſe arms of LOVE, which were widely extended on the Croſs only to receive you? Whence can your fears ariſe? What riſque do you run, in depending ſolely on your GOD, and abandoning yourſelf wholy unto him? Ah! he will not deceive you, unleſs by beſtowing an abundance beyond your higheſt hopes: but thoſe who expect all from themſelves, will inevitably be deceived, and muſt ſuffer this rebuke of GOD by his prophet Iſaiah, "Ye have wearied yourſelves in the multiplicity "of your ways, and have not ſaid let us reſt in peace." (Iſa. lvii. 10. vulgate.)

CHAP. XIII.

Of Reſt before GOD.

THE ſoul advanced thus far, hath no need of any other preparative than its quietude: for now the Preſence of GOD, which is the great effect, or rather continuation of Prayer, begins to be infuſed, and almoſt without intermiſſion. The ſoul certainly enjoys tranſcendent bleſſedneſs, and feels that "it is no longer ſhe "that lives, but CHRIST that liveth in her;" and that the only way to find him is introverſion. She no ſooner cloſeth her bodily eyes than ſhe is wrapt up in Prayer: ſhe is amazed at ſo great a bleſſing, and enjoys an internal converſe, which external matters cannot interrupt. The ſame may be ſaid of this ſpecies of prayer, that is ſaid of wiſdom: "all good things come together with "her." (Wiſdom vii. 11.) For the virtues flow from this ſoul into exertion with ſo much ſweetneſs and facility, that they appear natural and ſpontaneous: and the living ſpring within breaks forth ſo freely and abundantly into

all goodneſs, that ſhe becomes even inſenſible to evil. Let her then remain faithful in this ſtate; and be aware of chooſing or ſeeking any other diſpoſition whatſoever than this ſimple Reſt, as a preparative either to confeſſion or communion, to action or prayer: for her ſole buſineſs is to expand herſelf for the full reception of the Divine infuſions. I would not be underſtood to ſpeak of the preparations neceſſary for the ſacraments, but of the moſt perfect diſpoſitions in which they can be received.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Internal Silence.

"THE Lord is in his Holy Temple, let all the "earth keep ſilence before him." (Hab. ii. 20.) Inward ſilence is abſolutely indiſpenſible, becauſe THE WORD is eſſential and eternal, and neceſſarily requires diſpoſitions in the ſoul in ſome degree correſpondent to his nature, as a capacity for the reception of himſelf. Hearing is a ſenſe formed to receive ſounds, and is rather paſſive than active, admitting, but not communicating ſenſation; and if we would hear, we muſt lend the ear for that purpoſe: ſo CHRIST, THE ETERNAL WORD, without whoſe Divine inſpeaking the ſoul is dead, dark and barren, when he would ſpeak within us, requires the moſt ſilent attention to his all-quickening and efficacious voice.

Hence it is ſo frequently enjoyned us in Sacred Writ, to hear and be attentive to the voice of GOD: of the numerous exhortations to this effect, I ſhall quote a few: "Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, "O my nation!" (Iſa. li. 4.) and again, "Hear me, "all ye whom I carry in my boſom, and bear within "my bowels:" (Iſa. xlvi. 3.) and farther by the Pſalmiſt, "Hearken, O daughter! and conſider, and incline "thine ear; forget alſo thine own people, and thy fa"ther's houſe; ſo ſhall the King greatly deſire thy "beauty." (Pſal. xlv. 10, 11.)

We ſhould forget ourſelves, and all ſelf-intereſt, and liſten and be attentive to the voice of our GOD: and theſe two ſimple actions, or rather paſſive diſpoſitions, attract his love to that beauty, which he himſelf communicates.

Outward ſilence is very requiſite for the cultivation and improvement of inward; and, indeed, it is impoſſible we ſhould become truly internal, without the love and practice of outward ſilence and retirement. GOD ſaith, by the mouth of his prophet, "I will lead "her into ſolitude, and there will I ſpeak to her heart:" (Hoſ. ii. 14. vulg.) and unqueſtionably the being internally engaged with GOD, is wholly incompatible with being buſied, and employed in the numerous trifles that ſurround us. (Luke xxxviii. 42.)

When through imbecility or unfaithfulneſs we become diſſipated, or as it were un-centered, it is of immediate importance to turn again gently and ſweetly inward; and thus we may learn to preſerve the ſpirit and unction of prayer, throughout the day; for if prayer and recollection were wholly confined to any appointed half-hour, or hour, we ſhould reap but little fruit.

CHAP. XV.

Of Confeſſion and Self examination.

SELF-examination ſhould always precede confeſſion, and in the nature and manner of it ſhould be conformable to the ſtate of the ſoul: the buſineſs of thoſe that are advanced to the degree of which we now treat, is to lay their whole ſouls open before GOD, who will not fail to enlighten them, and enable them to ſee the peculiar nature of their faults. This examination, however, ſhould be peaceful and tranquil; and we ſhould depend on GOD for the diſcovery and knowledge of our ſins, rather than on the diligence of our own ſcrutiny.

When we examine with conſtraint, and in the ſtrength of our own endeavours, we are eaſily deceived and betrayed by ſelf-love into error; "we believe the evil "good, and the good evil:" (Iſa. v. 20.) but when we lie in full expoſure before the Sun of Righteouſneſs, his Divine beams render the ſmalleſt atoms viſible. It follows from hence, that we muſt forſake ſelf, and abandon our ſouls to GOD, as well in examination as confeſſion.

When ſouls have attained to this ſpecies of prayer, no fault eſcapes reprehenſion; on every commiſſion, they are inſtantly rebuked by an inward burning and tender

confuſion! ſuch is the ſcrutiny of him who ſuffers no evil to be concealed; and under its purifying influence, the one way is to turn affectionately to our judge, and bear with meekneſs the pain and correction he inflicts. He becomes the inceſſant examiner of the ſoul; ſhe can now, indeed, no longer examine herſelf; and if ſhe be faithful in her reſignation, experience will convince her, that ſhe is a thouſand times more effectually examined by his Divine Light, than by her own moſt active and vigorous inſpection.

* Thoſe who tread theſe paths ſhould be informed of a matter reſpecting their confeſſion, in which they are apt to err. When they begin to give an account of their ſins, inſtead of the regret and contrition they had been accuſtomed to feel, they find that love and tranquillity ſweetly prevade and take poſſeſſion of their ſouls: now thoſe who are not properly inſtructed, are deſirous of withdrawing from this ſenſation, to form an act of contrition; becauſe they have heard, and with truth, that it is requiſite: but they are not aware, that they loſe thereby the genuine contrition, which is this Infuſed Love, infinitely ſurpaſſing any effect produced by ſelf-exertion, and comprehending the other acts in itſelf as in one principal act, in much higher perfection, than if they were diſtinctly perceived, and varied in their ſenſation. Be not then troubled about other things, when GOD acts ſo excellently in you and for you.

To hate ſin in this manner, is to hate it as GOD does. The pureſt love is that which is of his immediate operation in the ſoul: why ſhould ſhe than be ſo eager for action? Let her remain in the ſtate he aſſigns it, agreeable to the inſtructions of Solomon: "Put your confidence in GOD; "remain in quiet where he hath placed you." (Eccleſ. xi. 22.)

The ſoul will alſo be amazed at finding a difficulty in calling her faults to remembrance: this, however, ſhould cauſe no uneaſineſs; firſt, becauſe, this forgetfulneſs of our faults is ſome proof of our purification from them; and in this degree of advancement it is beſt: ſecondly, becauſe,

* Though this inſtruction relates immediately to the cuſtoms of the Romiſh Church, it is however very applicable to Enlightened Souls on their approaching the Lord's Table, and at other ſeaſons of ſolemn Confeſſion.

becauſe, when confeſſion is our duty, GOD will not fail to make known to us our greateſt faults; for then he himſelf examines; and the ſoul will feel the end of examination more perfectly accompliſhed, than it could poſſibly have been by the utmoſt exertion of our own endeavours.

Theſe inſtructions, however, would be altogether unſuitable to the preceding degrees, while the ſoul continues in her active ſtate; wherein it is right and neceſſary ſhe ſhould in all things uſe her utmoſt induſtry, in proportion to the degree of her advancement. It is thoſe that have arrived to this more advanced ſtate, whom I would exhort to follow theſe inſtructions, and not to vary their one ſimple occupation even on approaching the communion; they ſhould remain in ſilence, and ſuffer GOD to act freely and without limitation. Who can better receive the Body and Blood of CHRIST, than he in whom the HOLY SPIRIT is indwelling?

CHAP. XVI.

Of Reading and Vocal Prayer.

IF, while reading, you feel yourſelf recollected, lay aſide the book, and remain in ſtillneſs: at all times read but little, and ceaſe to read when you are thus internally attracted.

The ſoul that is called to a ſtate of inward ſilence, ſhould not encumber herſelf with long vocal prayers: whenever ſhe does pray vocally, and finds a difficulty therein, and an attraction to ſilence, ſhe ſhould not uſe conſtraint by perſevering, but yield to the internal drawings, unleſs the repeating ſuch prayers be a matter of obedience. In any other caſe, it is much better not to be burdened with and tied down to the repetition of ſet forms, but wholly given up to the leadings of the HOLY SPIRIT; and herein, indeed, is every ſpecies of devotion incluſively fulfilled in a moſt eminent degree.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Petitions.

THE ſoul ſhould not be ſurprized, at feeling herſelf unable to offer up to GOD ſuch petitions, as ſhe had formerly made with freedom and facility; for now "the Spirit maketh interceſſion for her according to the "will of GOD, that Spirit which helpeth our infirmi-"ties: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we "ought; but the Spirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for us, "with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. viii. 26.) We muſt co-operate with, and ſecond the deſigns of GOD, which tend to diveſt us of all our own operations, that in the place thereof his own may be inſtituted. Let this then be done in you; and ſuffer not yourſelf to be attached to any thing, however good it may appear; for it is no longer good, if it in any meaſure turns you aſide from that which GOD willeth of you: the Divine Will is preferable to all things elſe. Shake off then all attachment to the intereſts of Self, and live on faith and reſignation; here it is that genuine faith begins truly to operate.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of Defects or Infirmities.

SHOULD we either wander among externals, or ſink into diſſipation, or commit a fault, we muſt inſtantly turn inwards; for having departed thereby from our GOD, we ſhould as ſoon as poſſible return unto him, and ſuffer in his preſence, whatever ſenſations he is pleaſed to impreſs. On the commiſſion of a fault, it is of great importance to guard againſt vexation and diſquietude, which ſprings from a ſecret root of pride, and a love of our own excellence; we are hurt, by feeling what we are: and if we diſcourage ourſelves or deſpond, we are the more enfeebled; and from our reflections on the fault a chagrin ariſes, which is often worſe than the fault itſelf.

The truly humble ſoul is not ſurprized at her defects or failings; and the more miſerable and wretched ſhe beholds

holds herſelf, the more doth ſhe abandon herſelf unto GOD, and preſs for a nearer and more intimate alliance with him, that ſhe may avail herſelf of an eternal ſtrength. We ſhould the rather be induced to act thus, as GOD himſelf hath ſaid, "I will make thee under-"ſtand what thou oughteſt to do; I will teach thee the "way by which thou ſhouldſt go; and I will have mine "eye continually upon thee for a guide." (Pſal. xxxii. 8. vulg.)

CHAP. XIX.

Of Diſtractions and Temptations.

A Direct conteſt and ſtruggle with diſtractions and temptations, rather ſerves to augment them; and withdraws the ſoul from that adherence to GOD, which ſhould ever be her principal occupation. The ſureſt and ſafeſt method of conqueſt, is ſimply to turn away from the evil, and draw yet nearer and cloſer to our GOD: a little child, on perceiving a monſter, does not wait to fight with it, and will ſcarcely turn its eyes toward it; but quickly ſhrinks into the boſom of its mother, in total confidence of ſafety: ſo likewiſe ſhould the ſoul turn from the dangers of temptation to her GOD. "GOD "is in the midſt of her," ſaith the Pſalmiſt, "ſhe ſhall "not be moved; GOD ſhall help her, and that right "early." (Pſal. xlvi. 5.)

If we do otherwiſe, and in our weakneſs attempt to attack our enemies, we ſhall frequently feel ourſelves wounded if not totally defeated: but, by caſting ourſelves into the ſimple preſence of GOD, we ſhall find inſtant ſupplies of ſtrength for our ſupport. This was the ſuccor ſought for by David: "I have ſet," ſaith he, "the Lord always before me: becauſe he is at my right-"hand, I ſhall not be moved. Therefore my heart is "glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt "in hope." (Pſal. xvi. 8, 9.) And it is ſaid in Exodus, "The Lord ſhall fight for you, and ye ſhall hold "your peace."

CHAP. XX.

Of the Prayer of Self-annihilation.

SUpplication and ſacrifice are comprehended in prayer, which, according to St. John, is "an incenſe, the "ſmoke whereof aſcendeth unto GOD;" therefore it is ſaid in the Apocalypſe, that "unto the Angel was given "much incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers "of all Saints." (Chap. viii. 3.)

Prayer is the effuſion of the heart in the preſence of GOD: "I have poured out my ſoul before GOD," ſaith the mother of Samuel. (1 Sam. i. 15.) The prayer of the Wiſe Men at the feet of CHRIST in the ſtable of Bethlehem, was ſignified by the incenſe they offered: for prayer being the energy and fire of Love, melting, diſſolving, and ſublimating the ſoul, and cauſing it to aſcend unto GOD; therefore, as the ſoul is melted and diſſolved, in like proportion do odours iſſue from it; and theſe odours proceed from the intenſe fire of Love within.

This is illuſtrated in the Canticles (i. 11.) where the Spouſe ſaith, "While the King ſitteth on his couch, "my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof." The couch is the ground or centre of the ſoul; and when GOD is there, and we know how to dwell with him, and abide in his Preſence, the ſacred power and influence thereof gradually diſſolves the obduration of the ſoul, and, as it melteth, odours iſſue forth: hence it is, that the Beloved ſaith of his ſpouſe, in ſeeing her ſoul melt when he ſpake, "Who is this that cometh out of the wil-"derneſs, like pillars of ſmoke perfumed with myrrh "and frankincenſe?" (Cant. v. 6.—and iii. 6.)

Thus doth the ſoul aſcend unto GOD, by giving up Self to the deſtroying and annihilating power of Divine Love: this, indeed, is a moſt eſſential and neceſſary ſacrifice in the Chriſtian religion, and that alone by which we pay true homage to the ſovereignty of GOD; as it is written, "The power of the Lord is great, and he is "honoured only by the humble." (Eccleſ. iii. 20.) By the deſtruction of the exiſtence of Self-hood within us, we truly acknowledge the ſupreme exiſtence of our GOD; for unleſs we ceaſe to exiſt in Self, the Spirit of THE ETERNAL WORD cannot exiſt in us: now it is by

by the giving up of our own life, that we give place for his coming; and "in dying to ourſelves, he himſelf "liveth and abideth in us."

We ſhould, indeed, ſurrender our whole being unto CHRIST JESUS; and ceaſe to live any longer in ourſelves, that he himſelf may become our life; "that be-"ing dead, our life may be hid with CHRIST IN GOD," (Col. iii. 3.) "Paſs ye into me," ſaith GOD, "all ye "who earneſtly ſeek after me." (Eccleſ. xxiv. 16.) But how is it we paſs into GOD? We leave and forſake ourſelves, that we may be loſt in him: and this can be effected only by annihilation; which being the true prayer of adoration, renders unto GOD alone, all "Bleſſing, "honour, glory and power, for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 13.)

This is the prayer of Truth; "It is worſhiping GOD "in ſpirit and in truth:" (John iv. 23.) "In ſpirit," becauſe we enter into the purity of that Spirit which prayeth within us, and are drawn forth and freed from our own carnal and corrupt manner of praying; "In "truth," becauſe we are thereby placed in the Truth of THE ALL OF GOD, and THE NOTHING of the creature.

There are but theſe two truths, THE ALL, and THE NOTHING; every thing elſe is falſehood. We can pay due honour to the ALL OF GOD, only in our own annihilation; which is no ſooner accompliſhed, than he, who never ſuffers a void in nature, inſtantly fills us with himſelf.

Did we but know the virtues and the bleſſings which the ſoul derives from this prayer, we ſhould willingly be employed therein without ceaſing. "It is the pearl of "great price: it is the hidden treaſure," (Matt. xiii. 44, 45.) which, whoever findeth, ſelleth freely all that he hath to purchaſe it: "It is the well of living water, "which ſpringeth up unto everlaſting life:" It is the adoration of GOD "in ſpirit and in truth:" (John iv. 14—23.) and it is the full performance of the pureſt evangelical precepts.

JESUS CHRIST aſſureth us, that the "Kingdom of GOD is within us:" (Luke xvii. 21.) and this is true in two ſenſes: Firſt GOD becometh ſo fully the Maſter and Lord in us, that nothing reſiſteth his dominion; then is our

our interior his kingdom: And again, when we poſſeſs GOD, who is the Supreme Good, we poſſeſs his kingdom alſo, wherein there is fullneſs of joy, and where we attain the end of our creation: thus it is ſaid, "to ſerve "GOD, is to reign." The end of our creation, indeed, is to enjoy our GOD, even in this life; but alas! how few there are who advert to this!

CHAP. XXI.

That we act more nobly, and with more energy, by this ſpecies of Prayer, than by any other.

SOME perſons, when they hear of the prayer of ſilence, falſely imagine, that the ſoul remains ſtupid, dead, and inactive. But, unqueſtionably, it acteth therein, more nobly and more extenſively, than it had ever done before; for GOD himſelf is her mover, and ſhe now acteth by the agency of his Spirit. When St. Paul ſpeaks of our being led by THE SPIRIT OF GOD, it is not meant, that we ſhould ceaſe from action; but that we ſhould act through the internal agency of his Grace. This is finely repreſented by the Prophet Ezekiel's viſion of the "wheels, which had a Living Spirit; and whi-"therſoever the Spirit was to go, they went; they aſ-"cended, and deſcended, as they were moved; for the "Spirit of Life was in them, and they returned not "when they went." (Ezek. i. chap. 18. verſe) Thus the ſoul ſhould be equally ſubſervient to the will of that Vivifying Spirit wherewith ſhe is informed, and ſcrupulouſly faithful to follow only as that moves. Her motions now never tend to return, in reflection on the creatures or herſelf; but go forward, in an inceſſant approach toward her chief end.

This action of the ſoul is attended with the utmoſt tranquillity. When ſhe acteth of herſelf the act is forced and conſtrained; and, therefore, ſhe can the more eaſily perceive and diſtinguiſh it: but when ſhe acteth under the influence of the Spirit of Grace, her action is ſo free, ſo eaſy, and ſo natural, that it almoſt ſeems as if ſhe did not act at all: "He hath ſet me at large, he "hath delivered me, becauſe he delighted in me." (Pſal. xviii. 19.)

When

When the ſoul hath got into her central tendency, or, in other words, is returned through recollection into herſelf; from that moment the central attraction becomes a moſt potent action, infinitely ſurpaſſing in its energy every other ſpecies. Nothing, indeed, can equal the ſwiftneſs of this tendency to the centre: and though an action, yet it is ſo noble, ſo peaceful, ſo full of tranquillity, ſo natural and ſo ſpontaneous, that it appears to the ſoul as if ſhe did not act at all.

When a wheel rolls ſlowly, we can eaſily diſtinguiſh its parts; but when its motion is rapid, we can diſtinguiſh nothing. So the Soul which reſts in GOD, hath an activity exceedingly noble and elevated, yet altogether peaceful: and the more peaceful ſhe is, the ſwifter is her courſe; becauſe ſhe is proportionably given up to that Spirit, by which ſhe is moved and directed.

This attracting Spirit is no other than GOD himſelf, who, in drawing us, cauſes us to run unto him. How well did the Spouſe underſtand this, when ſhe ſaid, "Draw me, and we will run after thee." (Cant. i. 3.) Draw me unto thee, O my Divine centre, by the ſecret ſprings of my exiſtence, and all my powers and ſenſes ſhall follow the potent magnetiſm! This ſimple attraction is both an ointment to heal, and a perfume to allure: "we follow," ſaith ſhe, "the fragrance of thy per-"fumes;" and though ſo powerfully magnetic it is followed by the ſoul freely, and without conſtraint; for it is equally delightful as forcible; and whilſt it attracts by its potency, it charms with its ſweetneſs. "Draw me," ſaith the Spouſe, "and we will run after thee." She ſpeaketh of and to herſelf: "draw me,"—behold the unity of the centre which attracteth! "we will run,"—behold the correſpondence and courſe of all the ſenſes and powers, in following that attraction!

Inſtead then of promoting idleneſs, we promote the higheſt activity, by inculcating a total dependence on the Spirit of GOD, as our moving principle; for it is "in him, and by him alone, that we live, and move, and "have our being." (Acts xvii. 18.) This meek dependence on the Spirit of GOD is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to reinſtate the ſoul in its primeval unity and ſimplicity, that ſhe may thereby attain the end of her creation. We muſt, therefore, forſake our multifarious activity, to re-

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enter the ſimplicity and unity of GOD, in whoſe image we were originally formed. "The Spirit is one and "manifold," (Wiſdom vii. 22.) and his unity doth not preclude his multiplicity. We enter into his unity, when we are united unto his Spirit, and have one and the ſame Spirit with him; and we are multiplied in reſpect to the outward execution of his will, without any egreſſion from our ſtate of union: ſo that, when we are wholly moved by the Divine Spirit, which is infinitely active, our activity muſt, indeed, differ widely in its energy and degree from that which is merely our own.

We muſt yield our ſelves to the guidance of "Wiſ-"dom, which is more moving than any motion;" (Wiſdom vii. 24.) and by abiding in dependence on its action, our activity will be truly efficient. "All things "were made by THE WORD, and without him was "not any thing made, that was made." (John i. 3.) GOD originally formed us in his own likeneſs; and he now informeth us with the Spirit of his WORD, that, "Breath of Life," (Gen. ii. 7.) which was inbreathed at our creation, in the participation whereof the Image of GOD conſiſted; and this life is a Life of Unity, ſimple, pure, intimate, and always fruitful. The Devil having broken and deformed the Divine Image in the ſoul, the agency of the ſame WORD, whoſe Spirit was inbreathed at our creation, is abſolutely neceſſary for its renovation; and it can only be renewed by our being paſſive under Him who is to renew it: but who can reſtore the Image of GOD within us in its primeval form, ſave he himſelf who is "the Eſſential Image of his "Father?"

Our activity ſhould, therefore, conſiſt, in endeavouring to acquire and maintain ſuch a ſtate, as may be moſt ſuſceptible of Divine impreſſions, moſt flexile to all the operations of the ETERNAL WORD. Whilſt a tablet is unſteady, the painter is unable to delineate a true copy: ſo every act of our own ſelfiſh and proper ſpirit is productive of falſe and erroneous lineaments; it interrupts the work, and defeats the deſign of this adorable painter: we muſt then remain in peace, and move only when he moves us. "JESUS CHRIST hath The Life "in himſelf," (John v. 26.) and he ſhould be the life of every living thing.

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As all action is eſtimable only in proportion to the dignity of the efficient principle, this action is inconteſtably more noble than any other. Actions produced by a Divine principle, are Divine; but creaturely actions, however good they appear, are only human, or at beſt virtuous, even when accompanied by Grace. JESUS CHRIST ſaith, "he hath The Life in himſelf:" All other beings have only a borrowed life; but THE WORD hath The Life in himſelf; and being communicative of his nature, he deſireth to communicate it to man. We ſhould, therefore, make room for the influx of this Life, which can only be done by the ejection of the Adamical life, the ſuppreſſion of the activity of Self. This is agreeable to the aſſertion of St. Paul: "If any man be "in CHRIST, he is a new creature: old things are "paſſed away; behold all things are become new!" (2 Corin. v. 17.) but this ſtate can be accompliſhed only by dying to ourſelves, and to all our own activity, that the activity of GOD may be ſubſtituted in its ſtead.

Inſtead, therefore, of prohibiting activity, we enjoin it; but in abſolute dependence on the Spirit of GOD, that his activity may take place of our own. This can only be effected by the concurrence of the creature; and this concurrence can only be yielded by moderating and reſtraining our own activity, that the activity of GOD may gradually gain the aſcendancy, and finally abſorb all that is ours, as diſtinguiſhable from it.

JESUS CHRIST hath exemplified this in the Goſpel: Martha did what was right; but becauſe ſhe did it in her own ſpirit, CHRIST rebuked her. The ſpirit of man is reſtleſs and turbulent; for which reaſon it does little, though it would appear to do much. "Martha," ſaith CHRIST, "Thou art careful, and troubled a-"bout many things; but one thing is needful; and "Mary hath choſen that good part, which ſhall not be "taken away from her." (Luke x. 41, 42.) And what was it that Mary had choſen? Repoſe, tranquillity, and peace. She apparently ceaſed to act, that the Spirit of CHRIST might act in her; ſhe ceaſed to live, that CHRIST might be her life. This ſhows us how neceſſary it is to renounce ourſelves, and all our activity, to follow CHRIST JESUS; and we cannot follow him, without being animated with his Spirit. Now

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that his Spirit might gain admiſſion of in us, it is neceſſary, that our own proper ſpirit ſhould be firſt expelled: "He that is joined unto the Lord," ſaith St. Paul "is "one Spirit with him:" (1 Cor. vi. 17.) and David ſaid, "It was good for him to draw near unto the Lord, and to put his truſt in him:" (Pſalm, lxxiii. 28.) this drawing near unto GOD, is the beginning of Union.

Divine Union has its commencement, its progreſſion, and its conſummation. It is firſt an inclination and tendency towards GOD: when the ſoul is introverted in the manner before deſcribed, it gets within the influence of the central attraction, and accquires an eager deſire after Union: on a nearer approach unto GOD, it adheres to him; and growing ſtronger and ſtronger in its adheſion, it finally becomes one; that is, "one ſpirit with him:" and it is thus the ſpirit which had wandered and ſtrayed from GOD, returns again unto its proper ſource.

Into this proceſs, which is the Divine motion, and the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, we muſt neceſſarily enter. St. Paul ſaith, "If any man hath not the Spirit "of CHRIST, he is none of his:" (Rom. viii. 9.) therefore, to be CHRIST's, we muſt be filled with his Spirit; and to be filled with his Spirit, we muſt be emptied of our own. The Apoſtle, in the ſame paſſage, proves the neceſſity of this Divine influence or motion: "As many" ſaith he, "as are led by the Spirit of GOD, "they are the ſons of GOD." (Rom. viii. 14.) The Spirit of Divine Filiation is then the Spirit of Divine action or motion: he, therefore adds, "Ye have not re- "ceived the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye "have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby ye cry, Abba, Father."

This Spirit is no other than the ſpirit of CHRIST, through which we participate of his Filiation; "And "this Spirit beareth witneſs with our Spirit, that we are "the children of GOD." (Rom. viii. 16.) When the ſoul yields herſelf to the influence and motions of this Bleſſed Spirit, ſhe feels the teſtimony of her Divine Filiation; and ſhe feels alſo, with ſuper-added joy, that ſhe hath received not the Spirit of bondage, but of Liberty, even, "the Liberty of the children of GOD." She then finds that ſhe acteth freely and ſweetly, though with vigour and infallibility.

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The Spirit of Divine action is ſo neceſſary in all things, that St. Paul, in the ſame paſſage, foundeth that neceſſity on our ignorance with reſpect to what we pray for: "The Spirit, ſaith he, "alſo helpeth our infirmities; "for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; "but the Spirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for us, with "groanings which cannot be uttered." This is poſitive: if we know not what we ſtand in need of, nor pray, as we ought to do, for thoſe things which are neceſſary; and if the Spirit which is in us, and to which we reſign ourſelves, aſks and intercedes for us; ſhould we not give unlimited freedom to its action, to its ineffable groanings in our behalf?—This Spirit, is the Spirt of the Word, which is always heard, as he ſaith himſelf: "I "know that thou heareſt me always;" (John xi. 42.) and if we freely admit this Spirit to pray and intercede for us, we alſo ſhall be always heard. The reaſon of this is given us by the ſame Apoſtle, that ſkilful Myſtic, and maſter of the Internal life, where he adds, "He "that ſearcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind "of the Spirit; becauſe he maketh interceſſion for the "ſaints, according to the will of GOD: (Rom. viii 27.) That is to ſay, the ſpirit demandeth only that which is conformable to the will of GOD; and the will of GOD is, that we ſhould be ſaved; that we ſhould become perfect: he, therefore, intercedeth for that which is neceſſary for ſo great an end.

Why ſhould we then burthen ourſelves with ſuperfluous cares, and fatigue and weary ourſelves in the multiplicity of our ways, "Let us reſt in peace?" GOD himſelf inviteth us to caſt our cares, our anxieties, upon him; and he complains in Iſaiah, with ineffable goodneſs, that the ſoul had expended its powers and its treaſures on a thouſand external objects, and miſtook its path to happineſs, which was attainable by means much more facile: "Wherefore," ſaith GOD, "do you "ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your "labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken dili- "gently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and "let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs." (Iſa. lv. 2.)

Did we but know the bleſſedneſs of thus hearkening unto GOD, and how greatly the ſoul is ſtrengthened and invigorated thereby, "All fleſh would ſurely be ſilent

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" before the Lord;" (Zech. ii. 13.) all would ceaſe and be ſtill, as ſoon as he appeareth. But to engage us farther in a boundleſs reſignation, GOD aſſures us, by the ſame Prophet, that we ſhould fear nothing in this abandonment, becauſe he takes a care of us, ſurpaſſing the higheſt tenderneſs of which we can form an idea: " Can " a woman, " ſaith he, " forget her ſucking child, that " ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? " Yea, ſhe may forget; yet will not I forget thee." (Iſa. xlix. 15.) O bleſſed aſſurance, pregnate with conſolation! Who after this, ſhall be fearful of reſigning themſelves wholly to the diſpenſations and guidance of their GOD?

CHAP. XXII.

Of Internal Acts.

ACTS are diſtinguiſhed into External and Internal. External acts are thoſe, which bear relation to ſome ſenſible object, and are either morally good or evil merely according to the nature of the principle from which they proceed. I intend here to ſpeak only of Internal acts, thoſe energies of the ſoul, by which ſhe turns internally to ſome object, and averts from others.

If during my application to GOD, I ſhould form a will to change the nature of my act, I thereby withdraw myſelf from GOD and turn to created objects, and that in a greater or leſs degree according to the ſtrength of the act: and if, when I am turned towards the creature, I would return to GOD, I muſt neceſſarily form an act for that purpoſe; and the more perfect this act is, the more complete is the converſion. Till converſion is perfected many re-iterated acts are neceſſary; for it is generally progreſſive, though with ſome it is almoſt inſtantaneous. My act, however, ſhould conſiſt in a continual turning unto GOD, an exertion of every faculty and power of the ſoul purely for him, agreeable to the inſtructions of the Son of Sirach: " Re-unite all the motions of thy " heart in the holineſs of GOD (vulgate) and to the example of David, " I will keep my whole ſtrength for " thee," (Pſal. lviii. 10. vulg.) which is done by earneſtly re-entering into one's ſelf; as Iſaiah ſaith, " Return " to your heart," (Iſa. xlvi. 8. vulgate); for we have ſtrayed from our heart by ſin, and it is our heart only that GOD requires: " my ſon give me thine heart, and " let thine eye obſerve my ways." (Prov. xxiii. 26.) To give the heart to GOD, is to have the whole eternal energy of the ſoul ever centring in him, that we may be rendered conformable to his will. We muſt, therefore, continue invariably turned to GOD, from our very firſt application to him.

But the ſoul being weak and unſtable, and accuſtomed to turn to external objects, ſhe is conſequently prone to diſſipation. This evil, however, will be counter-acted if, on perceiving her aberration, ſhe, by a pure act of return to GOD, inſtantly replaces herſelf in him; and this act ſubſiſts as long as the converſion laſteth, by the powerful influence of a ſimple and unfeigned return to GOD, and as many re-iterated acts form a habit, the ſoul contracts the habit of converſion; and that act which was before interrupted and diſtinct, becomes continual.

The ſoul ſhould not then be perplexed about forming an act which already ſubſiſts, and which, indeed, it cannot attempt to form without difficulty and conſtraint: ſhe even finds that ſhe is withdrawn from her proper ſtate, under pretence of ſeeking that which is in reality acquired, ſeeing the habit is already formed, and ſhe is confirmed in habitual converſion and habitual love. It is ſeeking one act by the help of many, inſtead of continuing attached to GOD by one ſimple act alone.

We may remark, that, at times, we form with facility many diſtinct yet ſimple acts; which ſhows that we have wandered, and that we re-enter our heart after having ſtrayed from it; yet when we have re-entered, we ſhould remain there in peace. We err, therefore, in ſuppoſing that we do not form acts; we form them continually: but they ſhould be in their nature conformable to the degree of our ſpiritual advancement.

The greateſt difficulty with moſt ſpiritual people, ariſes from their not clearly comprehending this matter. Now ſome acts are tranſient and diſtinct, others are continual; and again, ſome are direct, and others reflex. All cannot form the firſt, neither are all in a ſtate ſuited to form the laſt. The firſt are adapted to thoſe who have ſtrayed, and who require a diſtinguiſhable exertion,

proportioned to the degree of their deviation, which, if inconſiderable an act of the moſt ſimple kind is ſufficient.

By the continued act, I mean that whereby the ſoul is altogether turned toward GOD in a direct tendency, which always ſubſiſts, and which it doth not renew unleſs it has been interrupted. The ſoul being thus turned, is "In The Love," and abides therein; "and he that "dwelleth in Love dwelleth in GOD." (1John iv. 16.) The ſoul then, as it were, exiſteth and repoſeth in this habitual act, but free from ſloth or torpitude; for ſtill there is an un-intermitted act ſubſiſting, which is a ſweet ſinking into the Deity, whoſe attraction becomes more and more powerful; and in following this potent attraction, the ſoul preſſes farther, and ſinks continually deeper, into the ocean of Divine Love, maintaining an activity infinitely more powerful vigorous and effectual, than that which ſerved to accompliſh her firſt return.

Now the ſoul that is thus profoundly and vigorouſly active, being wholly given up to GOD, doth not perceive her activity, becauſe it is direct and not reflex: and this is the cauſe why ſome, who do not expreſs themſelves properly ſay, that they do not act at all; but it is a miſtake, for they were never more truly or nobly active: they ſhould rather ſay, that they did not diſtinguiſh their acts, than that they did not act. I allow they do not act of themſelves; but they are drawn, and they follow the attraction. Love is the weight which ſinks them into GOD, as into an infinite ſea, wherein they deſcend with inconceivable rapidity from one profound depth to another.

It is then an impropriety to ſay, that we do not form acts: all form acts, but the manner of their formation is not alike in all. The cauſe of the miſtake is this; all who know they ſhould act, are deſirous of acting diſtinguiſhably and perceptibly; but this cannot be: diſtinct and ſenſible acts are for beginners, and acts of a higher nature for thoſe in a more advanced ſtate. To ſtop in the former, which are weak and of little profit, is to debar one's ſelf of the latter; and again, to attempt the latter without having paſſed through the former, is a no leſs conſiderable error.

All things ſhould then be done in their ſeaſon: every ſtate has its commencement, its progreſs and its conſummation;

mation; and it is an unhappy error to ſtop in the beginning. There is even no art but what has its proceſs; and at firſt we muſt labour with diligence and toil, but at laſt we ſhall reap the harveſt of our induſtry. When the veſſel is in port, the mariners are obliged to exert all their ſtrength, that they may clear her thence, and put to ſea; but at length they turn her with facility as they pleaſe. In like manner while the ſoul remains in ſin and creaturely entanglements, very frequent and ſtrenuous endeavours are requiſite to effect her freedom; the cords which withhold her muſt be looſed; and then by ſtrong and vigorous efforts ſhe gathers herſelf inwards, puſhing off gradually from her old port; and, in leaving that at a diſtance, ſhe proceeds to the interior, the haven to which ſhe wiſhes to ſteer.

When the veſſel is thus turned, in proportion as ſhe advances on the ſea; ſhe leaves the land behind: and the farther ſhe departs from the old harbour, the leſs difficulty and labour is requiſite in moving her forward: at length ſhe begins to get ſweetly under ſail; and now proceeds ſo ſwiftly in her courſe, that the oar which is become uſeleſs is laid aſide. How is the Pilot now employed? He is content with ſpreading the ſails, and holding the rudder. To ſpread the ſails, is to lay one's ſelf before GOD in the prayer of ſimple expoſition, that we may be acted upon by his Spirit: to hold the rudder, is to reſtrain our hearts from wandering from the true courſe, recalling it gently, and guiding it ſteadily to the dictates of the Bleſſed Spirit, which gradually gain poſſeſſion and dominion of the heart, juſt as the wind by degrees fills the ſails and impels the veſſel. While the winds are fair, the Pilot and the mariners reſt from their labours, and the veſſel glides rapidly along without their toil; and when they thus repoſe, and leave the veſſel to the wind, they make more way in one hour, than they had done in a length of time by all their former efforts: were they even now to attempt uſing the oar, they would not only fatigue themſelves, but retard the veſſel by their ill-timed labours.

This is the manner of acting we ſhould purſue interiorly; it will, indeed, advance us in a ſhort time, by the Divine impulſion, infinitely farther than a whole life ſpent in reiterated acts of ſelf-exertion; and whoſoever will take this path will find it eaſier than any other.

If the wind be contrary and blows a ſtorm, we muſt caſt anchor to withhold the veſſel: our anchor is a firm confidence and hope in our GOD, waiting patiently the calming of the tempeſt and the return of a favourable gale, as David "Waited patiently for the Lord, and "he inclined unto him, and heard his cry." (Pſal. xl. 1.) We muſt, therefore, be reſigned to the Spirit of GOD, giving up ourſelves wholly to his Divine Guidance.

CHAP. XXIII.

An admonition to Paſtors and Teachers.

IF all who laboured for the converſion of others, were to introduce them immediately into Prayer and the Interior Life, and make it their main deſign to gain and win over the heart, numberleſs as well as permanent converſions would certainly enſue. On the contrary, few and tranſient fruits muſt attend that labour which is confined to outward matters; ſuch as burdening the diſciple with a thouſand precepts for external exerciſes, inſtead of leaving the ſoul to CHRIST by the occupation of the heart in him.

If miniſters were ſolicitous thus to inſtruct their pariſhoners, ſhepherds, while they watched their flocks, might have the Spirit of the primitive Chriſtians, and the huſbandman at the plough maintain a bleſſed intercourſe with his GOD; the manufacturer, while he exhauſts his outward man with labour, would be renewed in internal ſtrength; and every ſpecies of vice would ſhortly diſappear, and every pariſhioner become a true follower of the Good Shepherd.

O when once the heart is gained, how eaſily is all moral evil corrected! it is, therefore, that GOD, above all things, requires, the heart. It is the conqueſt of the heart alone, that can extirpate thoſe dreadful vices which are ſo predominant amongſt the peaſantry, ſuch as drunkenneſs, blaſphemy, lewdneſs, envy, and theft. JESUS CHRIST would become the univerſal and peaceful ſovereign, and the face of the church would be wholly renewed.

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The decay of internal piety is unqueſtionably the ſource of the various errors that have ariſen in the church; all which would ſpeedily be ſapped and overthrown, was inward religion to be re-eſtabliſhed. Errors are only ſo far prejudicial to the ſoul, as they tend to weaken faith, and deter from prayer; and if, inſtead of engaging our wandering brethren in vain diſputes, we could but teach them ſimply to believe, and diligently to pray, we ſhould lead them ſweetly unto GOD.

O how inexpreſſibly great is the loſs ſuſtained by mankind from the neglect of the interior? And how tremendous muſt the great day of retribution be to thoſe who are entruſted with the care of ſouls, for not having diſcovered and diſpenſed to their flock this hidden manna.

Some excuſe themſelves by ſaying, that this is a dangerous way; pleading the incapacity of ſimple perſons to comprehend ſpiritual matters. But the Oracles of Truth affirm the contrary: "The Lord loveth thoſe who walk "ſimply." (Proverbs xii. 22, vulgate) And where can be the danger of walking in "the only true way," which is JESUS CHRIST? of giving up ourſelves to him, fixing our eye continually on him, placing all our confidence in his grace, and tending with all the ſtrength of our ſoul to his pure Love?

The ſimple ones, ſo far from being incapable of this perfection, are, by their docility, innocency, and humility, peculiarly adapted and qualified for its attainment; and as they are not accuſtomed to reaſoning, they are leſs employed in ſpeculations, leſs tenacious of their own opinions. Even from their want of learning, they ſubmit more freely to the teachings of the Divine Spirit; whereas others, who are blinded by ſelf ſufficiency and enſlaved by prejudice, give great reſiſtance to the operations of Grace.

We are told in Scripture, "that unto the ſimple, "GOD giveth the underſtanding of his law; (Pſal. cxviii. 130. vulgate) and we are alſo aſſured, that GOD loveth to communicate with them: "The Lord careth "for the Simple; I was reduced to extremity and he "ſaved me." Pſal. cxiv. 6. vulgate) To warn Spiritual Fathers againſt preventing the little ones from coming to CHRIST, he himſelf ſaid to his Apoſtles, "Suf"fer little children to come unto me, for of ſuch is the

" kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. xix. 14.) It was the endeavour of the Apoſtles to prevent children from going to our Lord, which occaſioned this gracious charge. Man frequently applies a remedy to the outward body, whilſt the diſeaſe lies at the heart.

The cauſe of our being ſo unſucceſsful in reforming mankind, eſpecially thoſe of the lower claſs, is our beginning with external matters; all our labours in this field, do but produce ſuch fruit as endures not: but if the key of the interior be firſt given, the exterior would be naturally and eaſily reformed. To teach man to ſeek GOD in his heart, to think of him, to return to him whenever he finds he has wandered from him, and to do and to ſuffer all things with a ſingle eye to pleaſe him, is the natural and ready proceſs; it is leading the ſoul to the very ſource of Grace, wherein is to be found all that is neceſſary for ſanctification.

I, therefore, conjure you all, O ye who have the care of ſouls, to put them at once into this way, which is JESUS CHRIST; nay, it is he himſelf that conjures you, by the precious blood he hath ſhed for thoſe entruſted to you, " to ſpeak to the heart of Jeruſalem." (Iſa. xl. 2. vulgate) O ye Diſpenſers of his Graces, ye Preachers of his Word, ye Miniſters of his Sacraments, eſtabliſh his kingdom!—and that it may indeed be eſtabliſhed, make him Ruler over the hearts of his ſubjects! for as it is the heart alone that can oppoſe his Sovereignty, it is by the ſubjection of the heart that his ſovereignty is moſt highly exalted: " Give glory to the holineſs of " GOD, and he ſhall become your ſanctification." (Iſa. viii. 13. vulgate) Compoſe catechiſms particularly to teach prayer, not by reaſoning nor by method, for the ſimple are incapable thereof; but to teach the prayer of the heart, not of the underſtanding; the prayer of GOD's Spirit, not of man's invention.

Alas! by wanting them to pray in elaborate forms, and to be curiouſly critical therein, you create their chief obſtacles. The children have been led aſtray from the beſt of Fathers, by your endeavouring to teach them too refined too poliſhed a language. Go then, ye poor children, to your heavenly Father; ſpeak to him in your natural language; and though it be ever ſo rude and barbarous in the opinion of men, it is not ſo to him. A Father

A Father is much better pleaſed with an addreſs which love and reſpect in the child throws into diſorder, becauſe he knows it proceeds from the heart, than by a formal and barren harangue, though ever ſo elaborate in the compoſition. The ſimple and undiſguiſed emotions of filial love are infinitely more expreſſive than all language, and all reaſoning.

By forming inſtructions how to love by rule and method The ESSENTIAL LOVE, men have in a great meaſure eſtranged themſelves from him. O how unneceſſary is it to teach an art of loving! The language of Love, though natural to the lover, is nonſenſe and barbariſm to him that loveth not. The beſt way to learn the love of GOD, is to LOVE HIM. The ignorant and ſimple, becauſe they proceed with more cordiality and ſimplicity, often become moſt perfect therein. The Spirit of GOD needs none of our arrangements and methods; when it pleaſeth him, he turns ſhepherds into Prophets: and, ſo far from excluding any from the Temple of Prayer, he throws wide the gates, that all may enter; while Wiſdom cries aloud in the highways, " Whoſo is ſimple let him turn in hither;" (Prov. ix. 4.) and to the Fools ſhe ſaith, " Come eat of my bread, " and drink of the wine which I have mingled." (Prov. ix. 5.) And doth not JESUS CHRIST himſelf thank his Father, for having " hid the ſecrets of his kingdom " from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them unto " Babes?" (Matt. xi. 25.)

CHAP. XXIV.

Of the moſt certain method to attain Divine Union.

IT is impoſſible to attain Divine Union, ſolely by the activity of meditation, or by the meltings of the affections, or even by the higheſt degree of luminous and diſtinctly-comprehended prayer. There are many reaſons for this, the chief of which are as follow:

Firſt, According to Scripture " no man ſhall ſee " GOD and live." (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) Now all the exerciſes of diſcurſive prayer, and even of active contemplation, while eſteemed as the ſummit and end of the paſſive, and not merely as a preparative to it, are

ſtill "living exerciſes, by which we cannot ſee GOD;" that is to ſay, be united with him: for all that is of man's own power or exertion, muſt firſt die, be it ever ſo noble, ever ſo exalted.

St. John relates, "That there was a great ſilence in "heaven." (Rev. viii. 1.) Now heaven repreſents the fund and centre of the ſoul, wherein, ere the Majeſty of GOD appears, all muſt be huſhed to ſilence. All the efforts, nay, the very exiſtence of Self, or Propriety, muſt be deſtroyed; becauſe nothing is oppoſite to GOD, but propriety; and all the malignity of man is in this propriety, as in the power of its evil nature; inſomuch, that the purity of a ſoul encreaſes, in proportion as it loſes this ſelf-hood; till at length, that which had been a fault, while the ſoul lived in propriety, and acted from Self, becomes no longer ſuch, from the purity and innocence that ſhe hath acquired, by departing from that propriety, or ſelf-hood, which cauſed the diſſimilitude between her and GOD.

Secondly, To unite two things ſo oppoſite, as the impurity of the creature and the purity of GOD, the ſimplicity of GOD and the multiplicity of man, much more is requiſite than the impotent efforts of the creature: no leſs than a ſingular and efficacious operation of the Almighty can ever accompliſh this; for things muſt be reduced to ſome ſimilarity, before they can blend and become one. Can the impurity of droſs be united with the purity of gold? What then does God do? He ſends his own Wiſdom before him, as the laſt fire ſhall be ſent upon the earth, to deſtroy by its activity all that is impure therein; and as nothing can reſiſt the power of that fire, in like manner this Wiſdom diſſolves and deſtroys all the impurities of the creature, and diſpoſes it for Divine Union.

This impurity, ſo oppoſite to Union, conſiſts in PROPRIETY and ACTIVITY.

Propriety, or Self, is the ſource and fountain of all that defilement and corruption, which can never be allied to Eſſential Purity; the rays of the ſun may glance, indeed, upon filth and mire, but can never be united with them. Activity obſtructs Union; for GOD being an Infinite Stillneſs, the ſoul, in order to be united to him, muſt participate of this ſtillneſs, elſe the contrariety between ſtillneſs and activity would prevent aſſimulation.

Therefore

Therefore, the ſoul can never arrive to Divine Union but by the repoſe or ſtillneſs of her will; nor can ſhe ever become One with GOD, but by being re-eſtabliſhed in the purity of her firſt creation, that is, in this central repoſe. GOD purifies the ſoul by his Widom, as refiners do metals in the furnace. Gold cannot be purified but by fire, which gradually ſeparates from it and conſumes all that is earthly and hetrogeneous: it muſt be melted and diſſolved, and all impure mixtures taken away, by caſting it again and again into the furnace: thus it is refined from all internal corruption, and even exalted to a ſtate incapable of farther purification. The Goldſmith now no longer diſcovers any adultrate mixture; its purity is perfect, its ſimplicity compleat. The fire no longer touches it; and were it to remain an age in the furnace, its purity would not be increaſed, nor its ſubſtance diminiſhed. Then is it fit for the moſt exquiſite workmanſhip: and if, thereafter, this gold ſeems obſcured or defiled, it is no more than an accidental defilement, contracted by its contiguity to ſome impure body; but this is only ſuperficial, and widely different from its former impurity, which was hidden in the very center and ground of its nature, and as it were identified with it. Thoſe, however, who are ignorant of this proceſs, and its bleſſed effects, would be apt to deſpiſe and reject the veſſel of pure gold, ſullied by ſome external pollution; and prefer an impure and groſs metal, that appeared ſuperficially bright and poliſhed. Farther, the Goldſmith never mingles together the pure and the impure gold, leſt the droſs of the one ſhould corrupt the other; before they can be united, they muſt be equally refined: he, therefore, plunges the impure metal into the furnace, till all its droſs is purged away, and it becomes fully prepared for incorporation and union with the pure gold.

This is what St. Paul means, when he declares, that "the fire ſhall try every man's work of what "ſort it is:" (Cor. iii. 13.) he adds, "If any "man's work be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs but he "himſelf ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as by fire." (15. verſe) He here intimates, that there is a ſpecies of

works

works ſo degraded by impure mixtures, that though the mercy of GOD accepts them, yet they muſt paſs through the fire; to be purged from the contamination of Propriety and Self; and it is in this ſenſe, that GOD is ſaid "to examine, and judge our Righteouſneſs," (Pſalm. xiv. 3. vulg.) becauſe that "by "the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſ-"tified; but by the righteouſneſs of GOD, which "is by Faith in JESUS CHRIST. (Rom. iii. 20, &c.)

Thus we may ſee that the Divine Juſtice and Wiſdom, as an unremitting fire, muſt devour and deſtroy all that is earthly, ſenſual and carnal, and all Self-activity, before the ſoul can be fitted for and capable of Union with God. Now, this purification can never be accompliſhed by the induſtry of fallen man; on the contrary he ſubmits to it always with reluctance; he is ſo enamoured of Self-hood, and ſo averſe to its deſtruction, that did not GOD act upon him powerfully and with authority, he would for ever reſiſt.

It may, perhaps, be objected here, that GOD never robs man of his free will, he can always reſiſt the Divine Operations; and that, I therefore err, in ſaying GOD acts thus abſolutely, and without the conſent of man.

Let me, however, explain myſelf. By man's giving a paſſive conſent, GOD, without uſurpation, may aſſume a full power and an intire guidance; for having, in the beginning of his converſion, made an unreſerved ſurrender of himſelf, to all that GOD wills of him or by him, he thereby gave an active conſent to whatſoever GOD thereafter might operate or require. But when GOD begins to burn, deſtroy, and purify, then the ſoul, not perceiving the ſalutary deſign of theſe operations, ſhrinks from them; and, as the gold ſeems rather to blacken than brighten when firſt put into the furnace, ſo ſhe conceives, that her purity is loſt, and that her temptations are her ſins; inſomuch, that if an active and explicit conſent were then requiſite, the ſoul could ſcarcely give it, nay often would withold it. The utmoſt ſhe can do is to remain firm in her paſſive diſpoſition, enduring

enduring as well as ſhe is able all theſe Divine Operations, which ſhe neither can nor will obſtruct.

In this manner, therefore, the ſoul is purified from all her proper, diſtinct, perceptible and multiplied operations, which conſtitute the great diſſimilitude between her and GOD: ſhe is rendered, by degrees, conform *, and then uniform; and the paſſive capacity of the creature is elevated, ennobled and enlarged, though in a ſecret and hidden manner, and therefore called myſtical: but, in all theſe operations, the ſoul muſt concur paſſively. It is true, indeed, that, at the beginning of her purification, her activity is requiſite; from which, as the Divine Operations become ſtronger and ſtronger, ſhe muſt gradually ceaſe, yielding herſelf up to the impulſes of the Divine Spirit, till ſhe is wholly abſorbed in him. But this is often a difficult and tedious proceſs.

We do not then ſay, as ſome have falſely ſuppoſed, that there is no need of action in the proceſs of Divine Purification: on the contrary, we affirm it as the gate; at which, however, we would not have thoſe ſtop, who are to attain ultimate perfection, which is impracticable, except the firſt helps are laid aſide: for however neceſſary they may have been at the entrance of the road, they become afterwards mere clogs, and greatly detrimental to thoſe who adhere to them, preventing them from ever arriving at the end of their courſe. This made St. Paul ſay, "Forgetting thoſe things which "are behind, and reaching forth to thoſe which are be-"fore, I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the "high calling in CHRIST JESUS." (Phil. iii. 13.)

Would you not ſay that he had loſt his ſenſes, who having undertaken an important journey, ſhould fix his abode at the firſt inn, becauſe he had been told that many travellers, who had come that way, had lodged in the houſe and made it their place of reſidence? All that we ſhould wiſh then is, that ſouls ſhould "preſs toward "the mark," ſhould purſue their journey, and take the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt road; not ſtopping at the firſt ſtage, but following the counſel and example of St. Paul, ſuffer themſelves to be guided and governed by the Spi-

* Conform, by paſſivity and reſignation; and uniform, by "no "longer living herſelf, but by CHRIST living, moving, and acting in "her." (Gal. ii. 20.)

rit

rit of Grace, which would infallibly conduct them to the end of their creation, the enjoyment of GOD. But while we confeſs, that the enjoyment of GOD is the end for which alone we were created; that, "without holineſs," none can attain it, and that to attain it we muſt neceſſarily paſs through a ſevere and purifying proceſs; how ſtrange is it, that we ſhould dread and avoid this proceſs, as if that could be the cauſe of evil or imperfection in the preſent life, which is to be productive of glory and bleſſedneſs in the life to come!

None can be ignorant that GOD is the Supreme Good; that eſſential bleſſedneſs conſiſts in Union with him; that the ſaints are more or leſs glorified, according as this Union is more or leſs advanced *; and that the ſoul cannot attain this Union by the meer activity of its own powers: for GOD communicates himſelf to the ſoul, in proportion as its paſſive capacity is great, noble, and extenſive; it cannot be united to GOD, but in ſimplicity and paſſivity, and as this Union is beatitude itſelf, the way to it in ſimplicity and paſſivity, inſtead of being evil, muſt be good, muſt be moſt free from deluſion and danger, the ſafeſt, the ſureſt and the beſt.

Would JESUS CHRIST have made this the moſt perfect and neceſſary way, had there been evil or danger therein? No! all can travel this road to bleſſedneſs; and all are called thereto, as to the enjoyment of GOD, which alone is beatitude, both in this world and the next. I ſay the enjoyment of GOD himſelf, and not his gifts; which, as they do not conſtitute eſſential beatitude, cannot fully content the immortal ſpirit: the ſoul is ſo noble, ſo great, that the moſt exalted gifts of GOD cannot fill its immenſe capacity with happineſs, unleſs the Giver alſo beſtows himſelf. Now the whole deſire of the Divine Being is to give himſelf to every creature, according to the capacity with which it is endued; and yet, alas! how reluctantly man ſuffers himſelf to be drawn to GOD! how fearful is he to prepare for Divine Union!

Some ſay, that we ſhould not attempt, by our own ability, to place ourſelves in this ſtate. I grant it: but what a poor ſubterfuge is this? ſince I have all along aſſerted and proved, that the utmoſt exertion of the high-

* Pſal. lxxxvi. 10.—xlvi. 10. Zech. ii. 13.

eſt

eſt created being could never accompliſh this of itſelf; it is GOD alone muſt do it. The creature may, indeed, open the window; but it is the ſun himſelf, that muſt give the light.

The ſame perſons ſay again, that ſome may feign to have attained this bleſſed ſtate: but, alas! none can any more feign this, than the wretch, who is on the point of periſhing with hunger, can for a length of time feign to be full and ſatisfied; ſome wiſh or word, ſome ſigh or ſign, will inevitably eſcape him, and betray his famiſhed ſtate.

Since then none can attain this bleſſed ſtate, ſave thoſe whom GOD himſelf leads and places therein; we do not pretend to introduce any into it, but only to point out the ſhorteſt and ſafeſt road that leads to it: beſeeching ye not to be retarded in your progreſs by any external exerciſes, not to ſit down a reſident at the firſt inn, nor to be ſatisfied with the ſweets which are taſted in the milk for babes. If the Water of Eternal Life is ſhown to ſome thirſty ſouls, how inexpreſſibly cruel would it be, by confining them to a round of external forms, to prevent their approaching it; ſo that their longing ſhall never be ſatisfied, but they ſhall periſh with thirſt!

Let us all agree in the way, as we all agree in the end, which is evident and uncontrovertible. The way has its beginning, progreſs, and end; and the nearer we approach the end, the farther is the beginning behind us: it is only by proceeding from one, that we can arrive at the other. Would you get from the entrance to the diſtant end of the road, without paſſing over the intermediate ſpace? and ſurely, if the end is good, holy, and neceſſary, and the entrance alſo good, can that be condemnable, as evil, which is the neceſſary paſſage, the direct road leading from the one to the other?

O ye blind and fooliſh men, who pride yourſelves on ſcience, wiſdom, wit, and power, how well do you verify what GOD hath ſaid, that "His Secrets are hidden "from the great and wiſe, and revealed unto THE "LITTLE ONES,—THE BABES!"

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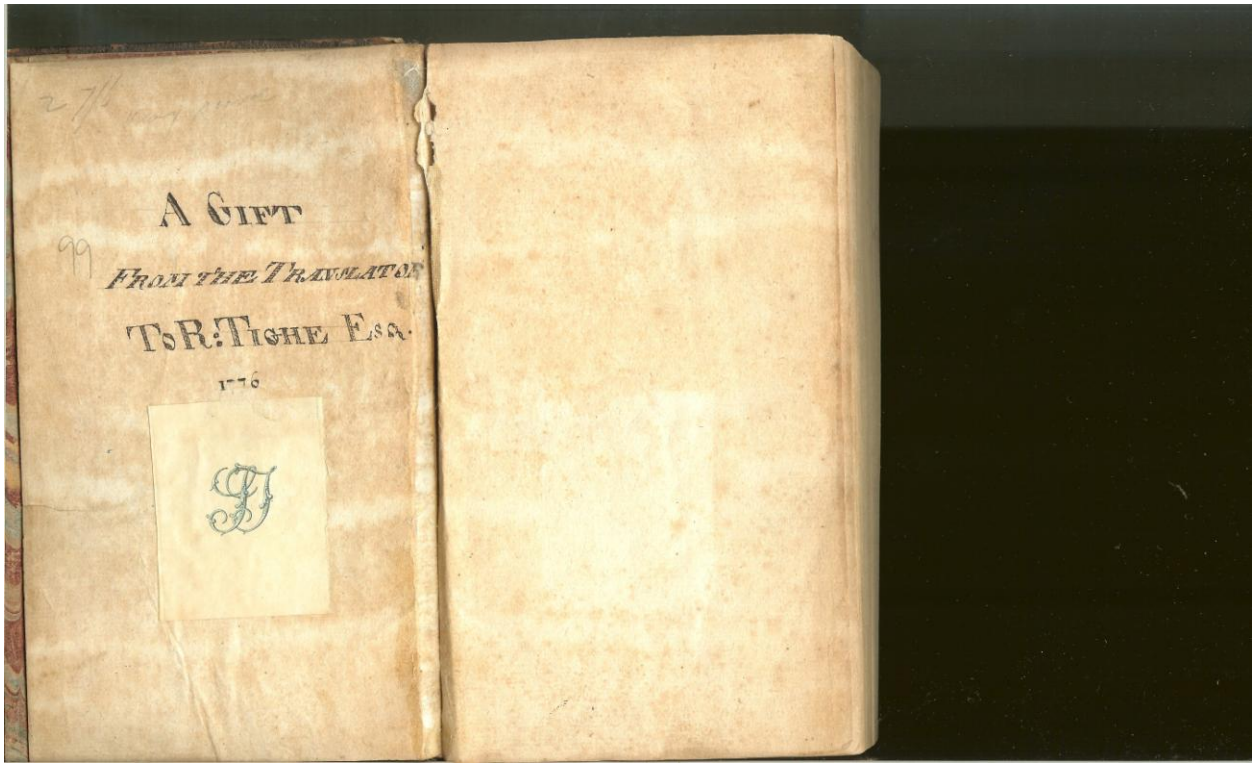
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